

Understanding GAP as a ‘Social Development’ Project: Failure or Success?

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Signature:

Dedication

For my daughter Zerya and my son Mîran

Abstract

This thesis aims to construct a comprehensive view of the GAP project from its establishment in the 1950s through to 2015 through employing two theoretical approaches ('modernization/development' and 'cosmopolitan' theories) and wide-ranging fieldwork in south-east Turkey, conducting interviews with local people, initiators of the project, local civil organizations and political actors. Modernization/development theory is employed to examine the content and conceptualization of GAP, cosmopolitan theory to assess obstacles to the GAP 'social development' project. Fieldwork has been undertaken to collect primary data and make the contextualization more comprehensive. In this way the thesis seeks to determine whether the GAP project has made positive progress towards enabling the sustainable development of the south-east and resolve the problem of the unequal socio-economic development of the south-east relative to the rest of Turkey. The thesis also seeks to determine whether the project has had a negative impact on the environment, archaeological sites, historical towns, settlements and cultural heritage in the region.

The main purpose of the thesis is to examine two factors in relation to the GAP 'social development' project: (1) understanding the core concept behind the materialization of the project, which involves ending the region's longstanding chronic poverty, provide socio-economic stability and creating integration with the industrialized west of Turkey; (2) a comparative analysis of empirical and theoretical work provides a review of the conceptualization of the project and investigation of the extent to which it has succeeded, and an assessment is made of obstructions which have led to the project failing to achieve many of its targets.

The thesis argues that four problems, three internal and one external, have impacted on the 'social development' aspect of the GAP project. It also points out the historical factors involved in Turkish policy for the region, and demonstrates how the success or failure of the project depends on how far the Turkish state understands the need for local cultural empowerment and operates in the interests of local people.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Along with the Nile River, which mankind began to utilize about 7,000 years ago for the cultivation of cereals and herding in Egypt and the Sudan (Hassan 2007), the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers have played a significant role in mankind's socio-economy since ancient times.¹ Along with the Nile, dams were constructed on the Euphrates and Tigris, and canals were dug to enable the cultivation of crops, which played a significant role in cultural identity, the religious beliefs of mankind, connecting people through their navigable channels and promoting the concentration of human settlements.

Having said that, in the modern world, from the beginning of the industrial revolution which ushered in an era of fast economic development in the advanced states with the help of agricultural economic enterprise, the notion of constructing dams and utilizing the water has been developed to enable the development of socio-economic conditions in a more sophisticated way. In particular, from the twentieth century onwards, the concept of infrastructure water projects have had an extraordinary impact on the social development of many countries, both advanced and developing.²

¹The biblical references indicate how the lands lying between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers were maintained by the ancient civilizations for irrigation and flood control (Mountjoy 2005). The ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia, led by Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians and Assyrians, organized effectively on the basis of irrigation and hydraulics, which supported millions of inhabitants in the region (Kliot 1994); and it was these civilisations, with the help of water, which created sophisticated systems which led to the development of the world's first arches, writing system, new cities, potters' wheels, metalworks, wheeled carts, the science of mathematics and astronomy (Stansfield 2007). Moreover, the great ancient cities such as the Assyrian capitals of Asshur, Nimrud and Ninevah, the Sumerian cities of Nippur and Ur, the ancient cities of Ashur, Calah, and Nineveh, the Median city of Amed, and the Abbasid towns of Baghdad, Samarra and Mosul were built on or near the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers (Kolars and Mitchell 1991). These cities took life from the water of these two rivers, and developed as a consequence. The modern world's knowledge of how to utilize water for large-scale irrigation and hydraulic projects is rooted in ancient times.

² Among these water projects are the Hoover Dam, which was completed in 1936 and prompted US agricultural and industrial development; the Kariba Dam in southern Africa, built in the 1950s for economic development; the Bhakra Dam in India built in the 1960s, which "became the symbol of India's green revolution, and was hailed by the then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru as a 'Temple of

States throughout the world have provided water for irrigation, hydroelectric purposes, industrial use, flood control and fresh water for domestic use. According to the World Commission on Dams (WCD),³ states built 45,000 big dams all over the world in the last century (WCD 2000). These large dams have had a mixed impact on local populations and the regions' demography. Negative effects on the regions include the flooding of historical sites and settlement areas and the creation of environmental problems all over the globe. However, dam projects have also been planned for facilitating flood control, planned irrigated agriculture and hydro-electric power plants for countries' energy needs, all of which bring significant benefits for the countries in which the dams have been constructed (Oktem 2002).

In Turkey since the creation of the republic in 1923, over 600 dams⁴ have been planned for domestic and industrial use,⁵ 22 of which were formulated in the south-east on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers under the name of the South-east Anatolia Project (*Güneydogu Anadolu Projesi* (GAP)) established in 1989, which comprises: 13 sub-projects of irrigation and energy schemes, 22 dams and 19 hydropower plants, expected to generate 27 million kWh electricity a year, that is “nearly two-thirds more than the amount of electricity produced hydroelectrically in the entire country” (Kolars & Mitchell 1991: 24). In terms of irrigation, the scope of the project represents about 20% of Turkey's total (18 million ha).

Although this \$32 billion (US) project was originated mainly for the purpose of hydroelectric power production and irrigation in the 1950s, led by the Turkish General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (*Devlet Su Isleri* (DSI)), by the late 1980s the GAP infrastructure incorporated a ‘social development’ programme

Modern India’ (*The Guardian* 12 January 2015); the Aswan Dam project in Egypt, which was one of the major achievements of the Egyptian government in the 1960s, and provided for Egypt's water and energy demands, and was used as a defence against droughts and for the creation of land irrigation (Hassan 2007); and Three Gorges Dam in China, completed in 2008, considered to be the largest hydroelectric scheme in the world.

³ The World Commission on Dams (WCD) was formed in 1997 by individual members who are not members of an organization or government and its commissioners began work in 1998 reviewing the effectiveness of large dams globally in terms of socio-economic, environmental and social development, and assessing alternatives for water and energy resources management. As Professor Kader Asmal, WCD Chair, stated: “Our task was to conduct a rigorous, independent review of the development effectiveness of large dams, to assess alternatives and to propose practical guidelines for future decision-making” (WCD 2000).

⁴ These 600 dams are large dams that were planned within Turkish borders, making Turkey one of the world's most active dam building states (internationalrivers.org). Small dams are not included.

⁵ See www.milliyet.com.tr and www.hurriyet.com.tr. (accessed 25 June 2015)

through the GAP Master Plan, under its Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA), which was established in 1989 and became an integrated regional modernization and development project.

According to the official statement of the Turkish state, the project was established in order to develop and modernize the most socio-economically underdeveloped region, the south-east, dealing with issues that had not been seriously considered since the creation of the Turkish Republic in 1923. According to official discourse, GAP⁶, through the Master Plan, was designed for increasing irrigation, power production, urban and rural infrastructure, education and health, housing, transportation, communication, agricultural and industrial development, and employment (Carkoglu and Eder 2005; Ünver 1997).⁷ So the Turkish government presents GAP as a modernizing ‘social development’ scheme that will create economic, social and spatial changes, and end the chronic poverty of the south-east/Kurdish region by raising local income levels and living standards, providing social stability and economic growth by enhancing the employment capacity of the regional sector and creating socio-economic integration between the underdeveloped south-east/Kurds and the industrialized west/Turks. GAP was initiated and presented the most comprehensive and significant projects in the south-east of Turkey.

Despite a certain amount of research addressing the implementation of GAP and the explanation of its role and political conception with regard to water use in the Middle East, including protection of historical sites and environmental issues, the current literature does not take a sufficiently broad view of the empirical and theoretical implications of the incomplete and fragmentary GAP ‘social development’ project.⁸ There is still a great range of questions which remain to be answered. For instance, has GAP really contributed to the development of the region? How did the approach of the Turkish state towards this project change in time in accordance with the changing political dynamics in the regional as well as the global context? In addition, the opinions of the people living in the region, whose life has been considerably impacted on by the project, have not received much attention in the

⁶ See more about GAP in ‘TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx’. (accessed 10 July 2015)

⁷ See the official GAP website: www.gap.gov.tr. (accessed 20 June 2014)

⁸ A more detailed overview of the literature on GAP and its ‘social development’ project is provided in Chapter Four, which stresses the ‘social development’ programmes, outlines GAP’s political implications and the incomplete nature of the GAP ‘social development’ project.

scholarly writings so far, which means that the research has failed to reflect the full picture of GAP.

This study, through wide-ranging fieldwork in the region involving interviews with local people, initiators of the project, local civil organizations and Kurdish political actors, aims to construct a comprehensive picture of GAP from the establishment of the project up to the present. It will also attempt to determine whether GAP has reached its main target, and examine the reasons behind the unfinished and fragmentary nature of the project.

1.2. Research questions and argument

The south-east region is the scene of longstanding historical conflicts and tense relationships between the Turkish state and the Kurds.⁹ For instance, historical evidence indicates that Turkey faced 17 minor and three major Kurdish uprisings between 1920 and 1938, and the state has been in conflict with the Kurdistan Workers Party or Partiya Karkerin Kurdistan (PKK) since 1984 (Heper 2005). All of this has pushed the region into deeper poverty, and this has become a major problem for the Turkish state in terms of socio-economic backwardness and political instability.

The policy-makers of the Turkish state have claimed that once the GAP project has succeeded in modernizing the south-east, this will resolve the problems not only in terms of the region's socio-economic situation but also in political terms with regard to the Kurdish question.¹⁰

Thus, with the aim of diminishing politically volatility and tackling the socio-economic issues of the south-east, the GAP project, which was considered to be an ambitious modernization strategy on the part of the Turkish state, and was supported by all the Turkish ruling elites and politicians, was intended to be completed by 2005. However, when the project had still not reached its goals by 2005, particularly in

⁹ At the end of the First World War, the Lausanne summit resulted in the land of the Kurds, Kurdistan, being divided into five pieces over five countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia (Ignatieff 1993). Ever since the Treaty of Lausanne, the tense relationship between the Turkish state and Kurds has increased, and the Kurds in the region have always been perceived as a threat to the unity of the Turkish state.

¹⁰ Regarding Turkish state policy-makers in relation to the concept of the GAP project and policies regarding transforming the south-east into a modernized region, see more from the statement of the former prime ministers and presidents of the Turkish republic such as Bülent Ecevit, Turgut Özal and Süleyman Demirel in Turkish national newspapers' websites such as www.milliyet.com.tr, www.Hurriyet.com.tr, www.sabah.com.tr and www.zaman.com.tr (accessed 2 March 2015).

terms of regional socio-economic development, the deadline was extended to 2010, and then further extended to 2012, but it has still not materialized.

Hence, the main aim of this research is to make the 'social development' aims and objectives of the GAP project more comprehensible, and to establish whether it has been beneficial for the most underdeveloped region of Turkey, the south-east, in terms of achieving its ultimate modernization/social development goal. The Turkish state claimed that GAP was a 'social development' project which would bring prosperity to the south-east, and this research seeks to understand to what extent such an assumption has been realised. In particular, it seeks to establish whether the project has created economic, social and spatial changes, and ended the chronic poverty of the region.

If not, what are the main obstacles preventing the project from bringing prosperity to the region in the form of developments such as profitable farming and vast employment opportunities for the local inhabitants? It is the aim of this thesis to reveal any obstacles and challenges.

The research first examines the nature of the GAP project and investigates the results of its 'social development' policy, exploring political obstacles that may have been preventing the policy from becoming reality. It suggests practical recommendations which could enable Turkey to implement a stable political solution for the south-east and abandon its traditional policies and mind-set towards the Kurds. However, the question arises as to whether Turkey will accept Kurdish cultural empowerment and work for the locals' interests or whether it will stick with its traditional policy. This depends on how far Turkey wants to create relationships not only with its own Kurds, but also with those in neighbouring countries.

In this context, the following questions are posed: what was the strategy of the Turkish state in transforming the project into a 'social development' project or integrated regional-social development project? What was the role of GAP in terms of regional political dimensions? How do we understand the 'social development' project of GAP in the context of the modernization/development approach and overall literature? What is the current condition of the GAP 'social development' project and how successful has the project been so far? To what extent do the regional political

development factors and global political shifts¹¹ play roles in fostering a sceptical attitude by the Turkish state towards the completion of the GAP ‘social development project’

1.3. Methodological considerations

I have undertaken fieldwork in the GAP region in order to clarify my theoretical position and explore the project on the basis of the evidence provided by people on the ground. Therefore, two research methods are implemented throughout. While I make use of primary data, which has been collected during field research, I also analyze the relevant literature, including books, academic articles and government publications.

My fieldwork (after a four weeks’ pilot study period spent in Turkey in February 2011, my second five weeks’ visit followed in June 2011 and ended in early July 2011) was mainly undertaken in six cities (Diyarbakir, Batman, Mardin, Sanliurfa, Istanbul and Ankara), five towns (Hasankeyf, Suruc, Harran, Halfeti and Samsat) and two villages (Ilisu and Yeniçagla) in the GAP region/south-east of Turkey. In order to gain factual information and experiential insights from varied perspectives, my interviewees included top members of staff of the GAP Project, such as members of the General Directorate, Sadrettin Karahocagil (the regional director) and Mehmet Açikgoz (president of GAP and the coordinator of the GAP social projects with locals who had been affected by the dams). In addition, I interviewed academics from Istanbul universities, and several NGOs in the GAP region together with MPs and local representatives. I have also worked through the governmental resources (gap.gov.tr, governmental reports and document/ Can Suyu: GAP 2010) and

¹¹ At the end of World War II, the world was divided into two predominant orders: capitalism (US/western Europe) and communism (Soviet Union/eastern Europe). War and peace focused on these two blocs. However, since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War, a new era began and a new world order was established. To be more specific, while the Hobbesian notion of the world order has become meaningless, the Kantian notion of ‘perpetual peace’ (which “required the transformation of individual consciousness” (Dunne 2001: 165)) and Benthamite liberalism (which “showed that federal states such as the German diet, the American Confederation, and the Swiss League were able to transform their identity from one based on conflicting interests to a more peaceful federation” (Dunne 2001: 166)) have become more constructive for the new world order. So, traditional international relations, which were based on the Realist tradition, have been fragmented by the development of transnational relations (Eriksson and Giacomello 2006) and this has led world politics to focus on other developments such as non-governmental organisations, which were becoming a new form of global actor, in the context of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy (Held 1995), which I will employ for this study.

independent surveys by various institutions such as the National Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (Ulusal Sanayici ve Isadamlari Dernegi (USİAD)), the Sociological Association (Sosyoloji Dernegi) based in Turkey, a comparative survey on the social and economic structure in the GAP Region, the State Planning Organization (SPO), SEGE's 2011 research, the web archive of Turkish national news channel CNN Turk, the Human Development Index 2000, GAP Action Plan Investigation and Assessment Report (Gap Eylem Planı İnceleme ve Değerlendirme Raporu) conducted by the Association of Turkish Engineering and Architecture (Türk Mühendis ve Mimar Odaları Birliği (TMMOB)), the report of the Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP) now called the Democratic Progress Institute, and the Turkish national newspapers archive.

With the aim of producing a well-researched study, the qualitative research method was employed during fieldwork. After a long period of studying and examining the GAP 'social development' project, I came to the conclusion that qualitative methods would be beneficial, because, "qualitative methods draw particular attention to contextual issues, placing an interviewee's attitudes and behaviour in the context of their individuals' biography and the wider social setting" (Devine 2002: 199). It has been ascertained that "[q]ualitative methods [...] are good at capturing meaning, process and context" (Ibid: 199).

The main source of primary data in this study was a series of in-depth interviews. The purpose of in-depth interviewing was neither simply to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses. At the root of in-depth interviewing was my interest in the knowledge and experience of my interviewees, and the meaning they made of their experience. As Devine (Ibid: 199) puts it: "the in-depth interview is about listening to people talking in order to gain some insight into their world-views and how they see things as they do." So, a basic assumption in in-depth interviewing research is that "the meaning people make of their experience affects the way they carry out that experience" (Seidman 2006:10).

So in order to understand the GAP project from its foundation to the present, as a means of comprehending its 'social development' and its current condition, this research was mainly based on one-to-one interviews. The interviews were mainly semi-structured and primarily open-ended and semi-formal. In order to gain factual information and experiential insights from varied perspectives, I devised largely open

interview questions and ended by allowing a free, unstructured discussion, which I have recorded.

Although my interviews, in general, were based on one-to-one in-depth research in order to fully grasp interviewees' experiences, I also carried out some group interviews. I realized that a group interview would take the pressure off my group interviewees, as Darlington and Scott (2002: 62) indicate, "hearing others talk about their experiences, in a supportive environment, may enable participants to feel comfortable about sharing their own experiences." My questions were mainly based on gauging my interviewees' understanding of the project and assessing whether it was created in the interests of the locals and the region's socio-economic development. In particular, I devised some critical questions for my interviewees as to why the project has not been successful.

Undertaking fieldwork in the south-east was not an easy task; there were obstacles, security being the main one. So I chose the right time for undertaking my fieldwork. As is well-known, violent conflict between the Turkish state and the PKK has been taking place since 1984 in Turkish Kurdistan, the Turks having responded to PKK resistance with heavily armed units, resulting in battles between 100,000 Turkish troops and the PKK with at least 10,000 guerrillas, which have turned the region into a war zone. Consequently undertaking wide-ranging fieldwork and detailed observation could have been very difficult.

However, during my visit (June and July 2011), there was a ceasefire by the PKK. As a result, the Turkish state softened its military operation. I knew from previous ceasefires that this one could not last long, because of political instability in the region, so I wanted to benefit from that semi-peaceful period to complete my fieldwork as soon as possible.

Despite the fact that I began my fieldwork during the ceasefire in the region, I realized that without primary networks and help in getting interviews, in particular with those villagers who were tired of the war between the Kurdish guerrillas and the Turkish state, it would have taken me a long time to complete the research on the ground. I contacted my relatives in Diyarbakir and friends in Urfa to assist me in visiting rural areas and the places I had never before visited, and most importantly used my contacts to find a way to get interviews. The advantages of easily obtaining interviews through my network resources and consulting with collaborators during the research provided me with a great opportunity to examine unrevealed issues and

undertake a substantial area of fieldwork. Also the ceasefire period made my work considerably easier in security terms.

I believe that I have achieved an in-depth understanding of the GAP so-called ‘social development’ project and its current condition, and gained Turkish policy-makers’ complex views, through assessing participants’ thoughts on the project.

1.4. Theoretical considerations

1.4.1. Modernization/development and cosmopolitan theories

Throughout this research, two main theories will be employed: modernization/development theory and cosmopolitan theory. Before examining the linkage between the GAP project and modernization/development theory, it is helpful to understand the materialization of the theory. The concept is considered to have begun with Adam Smith and David Ricardo, who are known as the ‘Classical Development Theorists’. Adam Smith’s book *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* “was published in 1776 and was a response to the mercantile (trade) focus of economic policy of that time in West Europe” (Willis 2005: 32). David Ricardo played a substantial role in economic development in the eighteenth century.

However, there is an argument that modernization theory also owes a debt to the work of Max Weber (1902-79) (see Andersen and Taylor 2006) and Emile Durkheim (Roberts and Hite 2000). Weber analyzed economic development in his influential book *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1958/1904) (see Andersen and Taylor 2006: 252). He believed that development and modernization “occurred in Europe during the Industrial Revolution as a result of the values and attitudes of Protestantism” (Andersen and Taylor 2006: 252).

From the viewpoint of early modernization theorists such as Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, “modern society was unique because, even though it grew out of European history, it required a fundamentally different way of thinking, working, and organizing as a society” (Roberts and Hite 2000: 4). However, modernization theory, reformulated by Max Weber’s follower, American sociologist Talcott Parsons, who

was also influenced by Emile Durkheim's 'structural functionalism', provided some core ideas in the 1960s, which were taken up by many 'modernization theorists'.

To understand the notion of modernization/development, one needs to take into account one of the best-known modernization theorists, Walt W. Rostow (1960), "who, as an economic adviser to U.S. president John F. Kennedy, was highly instrumental in shaping U.S. foreign policy toward Latin America in the 1960s" (Kendall, 2009: 267). One should also not neglect the British economist John Maynard Keynes, who, in 1936, published *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (Willis 2005: 34). The Great Depression (1930s) in the United States and the failure of the free market began a new era of understandings of national economies, and economists started to develop new theories for world economies. Keynes was among these new economists, and he believed that "[r]ather than letting the market operate alone [...] governments could intervene to promote investment either through monetary policies such as changing interest rates, or directly through government expenditure" (Willis 2005: 34-5).

Modernization/development theory, which requires a process and transition from 'traditional' to 'modern' society, is employed here to examine the concept and the materialization of the GAP 'social development' project. To ascertain the theoretical and practical answer to the question of 'modernisation' or 'development', particularly in the context of the global political economy, it is necessary to examine it from different perspectives. Only by doing this can one grasp how development has occurred or what development means in theory as well as in practice.

I will analyze the notion of modernization/development theory in relation to GAP in more detail in Chapter Three. However, in this section it is necessary to outline its origins and contextual framework. According to Hegel, the history of world 'development' is one of 'progression to the better' (Leys 1994). For Wallerstein, the notion of how development occurs is more straightforward. He states (1994: 4) that "nations or states or societies somehow (and somewhere) begin; then they grow or develop." Nevertheless, the notion of development is complex, abstract and perceived differently among theorists, because it involves both theory and practice, that is, both ideas about how development should or might occur, and real-world efforts to put various aspects of development practice into practice (Potter 2008: 67). As Willis defines it, while some see the definition of 'development' as economic growth and increase in economic wealth, or as social improvement, as Turkey proposed via GAP

for the south-east, others see ‘development’ as encompassing “ideas of greater autonomy and choice about how individuals live their lives” (Willis 2005: 200).

For instance, for rural Africa, Asia and Latin American countries, the notion of ‘development’ can be understood as “experience in practice processes that are described to them as development, in terms of official discourse inspired by or dressed up in an idiom of Western origin” (Dahl and Megerssa 1997: 52). Whatever development means, as Willis puts it (2005: 200), “[s]ome form of development may lead to increasing inequalities between places, while other development approaches may explicitly attempt to reduce spatial inequalities.”

For Talcott Parsons, who developed some core ideas in the 1960s which were taken up by many ‘modernization theorists’,

modernization came to be seen as the process by which the transition from ‘traditional’ to ‘modern’ forms of social organization which had emerged in the West would be transferred to the non-Western societies, and this was supposed to be achieved using ‘structural functionalist’ approaches. (Nabudere 1997: 205)

Nevertheless, as Binns (2008: 83) infers, Walt W. Rostow’s (1960) ‘unilinear’ model is one of the best-known attempts to indicate how a country’s economy and society progressed through a series of stages in the 1960s.

Works of Parsons and Rostow, which I will scrutinise in more detail in Chapter Three, are important in relation to the south-east’s socio-economic development via the GAP social programme. The region has been a socially, economically, geo-politically and ethnographically problematic issue for the modern Turkish state, to which GAP was thought to be the answer.

There are substantial criticisms (see Chapter Three) about the failure of the concept of modernization/development in many underdeveloped countries,¹² and I

¹² “These countries are mainly African and Latin American countries, who found themselves in positions of ‘underdevelopment’ because of the operation of the capitalist system” (Willis 2005: 69). To study these countries’ underdeveloped situation, see the works of Dodds, K. (2002) *The Third World, Developing Countries, the South, Poor Countries*; Dos Santos, T. (1993) *The Structure of Dependence, Development and Underdevelopment*; Escobar, A. (1995) *Encountering Development: The making and unmaking of the Third World*; Galeano, E. (1997) *To Be Like Them*; Frank, G. A. (1966) *The Development of Underdevelopment*; Valenzuela, J. Samuel and Arturo Valenzuela (1978)

argue that the core concept of modernization/development theory is based on the self-interest of certain dominant states. However, this is the only theory which fits the original concept of the GAP ‘social development’ project, and it provides an excellent framework within which to explore the intention of the GAP policy-makers regarding ‘modernization/development’.

Cosmopolitan theory, which developed in the aftermath of the post-Cold War era in the form of a new democratic regime, will be employed to analyse the Turkish state’s current overall approach to the GAP project, and I will assess whether the notion of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy has been an obstacle to GAP development in the south-east (see Chapter Seven).

Cosmopolitan democracy, according to Archibugi, may be a combination of words which was used in classical Athens, derived

from the Greek *cosmos* + *polis* and *demos* + *kratos*. However, while *cosmopolis* (literally, the city of the universe) was used to describe an ideal condition, democracy (the power of the many) was employed for very practical purposes, i.e. the everyday management of public affairs. (Archibugi 2012: 12)

However, it is argued that the notion of cosmopolitanism “[i]nspired by the work of Immanuel Kant, has received its most sustained analysis in the scholarship of David Held (1992; 1995; 1996; 1999; 2000; 2002; 2004)” (Frith 2008: 216). In the modern period, numerous philosophical supporters of cosmopolitanism “have tended to associate cosmopolitanism with a universalistic orientation towards world community” (Delanty 2008: 217):

The justification for a new global order based on cosmopolitan moral principles is arguably much stronger now than it was in Immanuel Kant's time. Whereas Kant's cosmopolitan theory was prompted by a deep aversion to the ravages of war, contemporary cosmopolitan theory is a response to a much wider range of global problems: economic injustice, poverty, malnutrition,

human rights abuses and ecological degradation. (Eckersley 2007: 675)

Cosmopolitan democracy attempts to reconstruct a democratic principle in that “it reconnects mechanisms of representation and accountability with social practices and power relations that operate within, across and beyond territorial borders” (Frith 2008: 216). In short, the theory of the cosmopolitan requirement

entails providing citizens with the opportunity to participate in world politics parallel to and independently from the governments of their own states. Our own understanding of cosmopolitan democracy is that such a transformation of global politics could also generate progressive alternations in domestic policies. In particular, we assume that if global politics becomes more accountable and representative, this may also have an important effect on domestic politics, allowing each political community to further consolidate its own political institutions. (Archibugi & Held 2011: 436)

So in order to comprehend the notion of cosmopolitan democracy, it is important to note that in the aftermath of the Cold War, as many authors state (Buzan 1998; Strange 1996; Rumford 2003; Held 1995; Shaw 1997), sovereign states or nation-states, which were once universal, have been losing their classical position in the global system.

Shaw (Ibid: 500) points out that “the most recent phase of globalization, in the second half of the twentieth century, has certainly involved a decline in the autonomy of the nation-state, as simplistic theories of globalization imply.” According to Strange (1996: 3-4), the notion of the state “has been swept away by a pace of change more rapid than human society had ever before experienced.” So, the idea that the state is in control of everything, in particular borders, has now lost its authority and this has become a hot topic for many social scientists:

Where states were once the masters of markets, now it is the markets which, on many crucial issues, are the masters over the governments of states. And the declining authority of states is reflected in a growing diffusion of authority to other institutions and associations, and to local and regional bodies, and in a growing asymmetry between the larger states with structural power and

weaker ones without it. (Ibid: 4)

Hence, as has been argued, since the post-Cold War period, “[m]any issues and problems – pollution, the use of diminishing resources, the regulation of global trade – [could not] be acted on effectively by any single nation-state” (Rumford 2003: 20). The question arises as to how nation-states have been embedded in such a complex network of political power. The answer can be examined in the framework of ‘cosmopolitan democracy’, which was developed by a group of thinkers¹³ who expanded the theory of a new democracy both within states and at a global level, which it (cosmopolitanism) “embedded in rules systems and institutions which have transformed the sovereign states system in a number of important respects” (Held 2002: 313). As Rumford describes it, the “Westphalian regime of a world of nation-states has given way to a cosmopolitan world order” (2003: 384).

In short, cosmopolitan regimes of democracy have put the nation-state under severe pressure by the democratic developments within the globalized world system (Ibid), which required that political power be handled by democratic actors¹⁴ and a strong rule of law.¹⁵ The model of cosmopolitan democracy was developed and allowed the citizens of the world to enjoy fundamental human rights (Held 1995), and it pushed states to consider the rule of law for governing democracy; respect for human rights and the functioning of a democratic market economy. So, actors such as the European Union (EU) have become a main “bearer of such practices and conform(s) to ...‘cosmopolitan democracy’; emerging forms of transnational governance [work] to ensure that the democratic state will be the global norm, and also that democracy will be deepened in countries” (Rumford 2003: 384). In

¹³ Daniele Archibugi and David Held (eds.), *Cosmopolitan Democracy: an agenda for a new world order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); David Held, *Democracy and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Daniele Archibugi, David Held, and Martin Koehler, eds., *Re-imagining Political Community: studies in cosmopolitan democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998). For more detail, see Daniele Archibugi, *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: toward cosmopolitan democracy* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

¹⁴ These bodies of democratic actors consist of non-governmental international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe, and independent non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Amnesty International (Archibugi 2012; Archibugi & Held 2011).

¹⁵ See Archibugi and Held, 2011, in *Cosmopolitan Democracy: Paths and Agents*, regarding rule of law such as International Criminal Court (ICC), The International Court of Justice (ICJ) and International administrative courts.

particular, the enforcement of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy has been demanded of the candidates for EU accession.

Since then, the cosmopolitan regimes of democratization have had to be employed by EU candidates and, since Turkey had been knocking on the EU door (see more in Chapter Seven regarding Turkish-EU relations) ever since the establishment of the republic (the last request of the first president of the Turkish republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was for Turkey to join western civilization), the question arises as to whether Turkey has adopted a cosmopolitan regime of democratization and seen the GAP project not only in terms of economic growth and security but also as a vehicle for local cultural and political rights in the south-east, as well as creating a functioning democratic market economy in the region. Whether or not Turkey has been adhering to authoritarian law,¹⁶ it is the obligation of this thesis to explore how far the republic has grasped the cosmopolitan criteria in relation of the GAP ‘social development’ project. Hence, in Chapter Seven, the study will further analyse the concept of the cosmopolitan principle and see to what extent it has impacted on Turkish politics in relation to the project.

1.5. Chapter outline

The main aim of Chapter Two is to outline the construction of the GAP project, its historical background and the incorporated proposal for a ‘social development’ programme for the south-east region.

Chapter Three is divided into two sections. Firstly, it discusses the Turkish-Kurdish historical background and draws attention not only to historical Turkish state policy in the region but also to the uneven socio-economic development between the region and the rest of the country. Secondly, the chapter analyzes the GAP project

¹⁶ Turkey still ruled by an authoritarian law, which was imposed by the former chief of staff, Kenan Evren, a leading commander in the 1980 coup who was later installed as president of Turkey. It delivered the military “the right to veto constitutional amendments and appoint constitutional court judges” (Jacoby 2005: 647). Additionally, the 1980s military intervention saw the drafting of the new constitution in 1982, which further entrenched the military in day-to-day Turkish politics. Under Article 118, it was declared that:

The National Security Council shall submit to the Council of Ministers its view on taking decisions and ensuring necessary cooperation with regard to the formation, determination, and implementation of the national security policy of the state. The council of Ministers should give priority consideration to the decisions of the National Security Council concerning the measures it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the state, the integrity and indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of society. (Özbudun 2000: 108)

through the lens of modernization/development theory, drawing upon its interrelationship with GAP. It demonstrates how the GAP ‘social development’ project was formed in the framework of the modernization/development theory in order to fill the socio-economic gap between the south-east and the west of the country.

The main aim of Chapter Four is to critically engage with the literature on GAP and its ‘social development’ project in order to indicate its limitations, draw out the significant questions, and identify important issues regarding the current state of GAP’s social programmes, which are not addressed clearly in the existing literature but are revealed in this thesis.

Chapter Five critically analyses the GAP ‘social development’ project and investigates whether it has led to sustainable development. Whilst the chapter analyzes the results of the project, it also reveals the Turkish state’s hidden politics regarding the project.

Chapter Six elaborates on the positive progress of the GAP ‘social development’ project and the way in which Turkey has gained power production from it. The chapter also reveals the negative impact of the project, which has wreaked destructive effects on people’s lives in terms of displacement, destruction of historical sites and the environment. This chapter is also based on a competitive analysis of GAP with the Aswan project in Egypt. While it explores the destructive elements of both projects, the differences appear to lie in policy-makers’ mind-sets with regard to social development issues.

Chapter Seven focuses on an account of numerous obstacles that the project has encountered in the struggle to achieve its key aims and realize sustainable social development. Thus, the chapter mainly concentrates on regional political instability and new political developments such as the rise of the Kurdish national movement, a pro-Kurdish political party and the failure to resolve the Kurdish question or undertake a successful peace process with the PKK. Finally, the chapter reveals the Turkish state’s scepticism about the concept of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy development, led by the EU, which demands empowerment of the people, as regimes of democratization may have an important, essentially negative impact on Turkish authority in the south-east, which Turkish policy-makers believe may lead to Kurdish self-determination.

Chapter Eight draws together the final arguments based on analysis of my theoretical and empirical work, and concludes that the emergence of the GAP ‘social development’ project, as a tool to deal with the south-east’s socio-economic backwardness, has faced internal or regional political developments on the one hand and an external political development in the shape of the globalized world system on the other, both of which have had a crucial detrimental impact on the completion of the project.

CHAPTER TWO

What is the Southeast Anatolia Project or *Güneydogu Anadolu Projesi* (GAP)?

2.1. Introduction

Whilst the main aim of this chapter is to outline the background of GAP and the formation of its ‘social development’ manifestation, it also examines the data related to power production and progress in irrigation. Therefore the chapter is divided into two sections: the examination in the first section (‘Historical Background of the GAP Project: Physicality and Construction’) of the physicality, construction and historical background of the project leads us to study and identify its varying typological formation in different periods.

The chapter begins by outlining the complexity of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers’ (discharge) waterways in the region and describing these rivers’ historical significance for human beings in Mesopotamia. It outlines the exploration of the potential of Euphrates and Tigris river water in the south-east of Turkey, and then it inspects each river’s geographical location and dimension. The chapter argues that both rivers are of historical importance in the region, and stresses that the massive dams that Turkey has constructed on these ancient rivers through the GAP project have played a significant role in human life.

The second section (‘Origin of GAP and the Formation of the “Social Development” Project’) concentrates on the main concern of my study, the GAP ‘social development’ project and its programme under the GAP-Master Plan. The section defines the programmes incorporated in GAP’s ‘social development’ project, led by governmental agencies, including the Master Plan and other Action Plans such as the GAP Entrepreneurship Regional Development programme or *Bölgesel Kalkınmada Girişimciligin Gelistirilmesi* (GAP-GIDEM), which is designed to encourage business men and firms to invest in the south-east, Multi-Purpose Community Centres or *Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri* (ÇATOM),¹⁷ which were created mainly to help young girls who migrated from villages and rural areas to the

¹⁷ ÇATOMs were established between 1992 and 1994 and, since 1995, they have been active in nine provinces of the south-east. There are now 44 ÇATOM centres in the region. See more in www.gap.gov.tr. (accessed 20 March 2013)

cities, and who were struggling to cope with their new lives in the city, the GAP Youth House Centre or *GAP Gençlik Evleri*,¹⁸ which was established to enable young people to be involved in social activities, and also Children's Development Centres or *Çocuk Gelisim Merkezleri*, which, like ÇATOM centres, provide social services, in particular for children, mainly from poor families, who needs help in terms of education and other social activities. This section outlines these programmes to enable understanding of how it was proposed that the project would overcome the south-east's poor socio-economic situation, improve the living standards and quality of life of the local people, and increase their per capita income.¹⁹

In addition, the chapter scrutinizes the origins of GAP, surveying the project as it was in the 1930s, 1950s and post-1980s. It also discusses the dams which have been built as a part of the GAP project, and assesses the nine south-eastern provinces where the project is located. This will provide a basis on which to describe the ways in which the organization of the GAP Regional Development Administration has been constructed.

2. 2. Historical background of the GAP project: physicality and construction

2.2.1. Euphrates and Tigris water: exploration of the potential

Unlike the Nile river, which “is maintained almost entirely by rainfall from outside the region in Ethiopia and East Africa” (Anderson 2000: 74), the Euphrates and Tigris rivers are wholly fed by indigenous rainfall and snow, when it melts in summer and flows down from the mountains. The Euphrates and Tigris rivers are the most significant water resources in Turkey, between them providing 28% of the total water potential of Turkey's supply. The two rivers also make Turkey a major riparian country (upstream of Syria and Iraq). “Estimates on the total annual flow of Euphrates vary between 28.7-30.5 billion cubic metres. The Tigris' estimated annual total flow is between 43-52.6 billion cubic metres” (Allan 2002: 71). Almost 90% “of the mean flow of the Euphrates is drained from the Tigris and its tributaries, with the average

¹⁸ GAP Youth House Centre exists in nine south-eastern provinces: Adıyaman, Batman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa and Şırnak. Its main aim is to integrate these young people into mainstream society. See www.gap.gov.tr for more details (accessed 16 April 2014).

¹⁹ As indicated, this chapter mainly outlines the project proposals. In Chapter Five, I will focus on whether the project has made progress and become a sustainable development project.

total discharge determined as 52 bcm/year. Turkey contributes approximately 40[%] of the total annual flow, whereas Iraq and Iran contribute 51[%], and 9[%], respectively” (Kibaroglu 2007: 2). As we see from the above statistics, the water of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers is of great significance in the region. Although it is not my purpose to study in detail the role of these two rivers in the Middle East more widely, it is contextually important to look at their significance. In the following section, I concentrate on their historical significance for the region.



www.economist.com (Accessed 15 April 2015).

Map 2.1. The location of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Both have their source in north-east Turkey, and flow through the south-east region on their way towards the Persian Gulf.

2.2.2. The role of the Euphrates -Tigris in Ancient Mesopotamia

The Karasu and Murat are the main sources of the Euphrates River, beginning on slopes in the north-east of Turkey and joining together north-west of Elazig city in eastern Turkey. While the Karasu originates north of the city of Erzurum, the Murat begins north of Lake Van city in the same region. The Euphrates thereafter flows

“through the southeastern Taurus Mountains and crosses into Syria at Karkamis (Carablus, ancient Carchemish) downstream from the Turkish town of Birecik” (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 4). The 2,700 km long river traverses Syria and enriches its flow from the Syrian tributaries of the Balikh and the Khabur. At 360 km downstream from the Iraqi-Syrian border, it joins its sister, the Tigris, which merge as the Shatt al-Arab, and flow into the Persian Gulf.²⁰

The 1,900 km long Tigris River is a typical mountain stream; the second largest river in southwest Asia, it rises in eastern Turkey near Lake Hazar, cuts through the Taurus Mountains, and flows for 400 km through the east and south-east of Turkey (populated mainly by Kurds). The Tigris then cuts through the border city of Cizre,²¹ in the south-east of Turkey, where it delineates the border between Turkey and Syria for 32 km, then crosses into Iraq. “On its journey through Iraq, numerous tributaries enter the left bank of the Tigris from the Zagros Mountains to the east. Among these tributaries are the Greater Zap, the Lesser Zap, the Adhaim, and the Diyala” (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 6). Finally, the Tigris is united with its sister river, the Euphrates, and continues as the Shatt al-Arab for 179 km until it reaches the Persian Gulf (Langer 2009: 3).

Along with the Yellow River, the Indus, Mississippi, Amazon, Congo and Nile, the Euphrates and Tigris rivers have played a significant role in human affairs since ancient times. These two ancient rivers hold a place in the myth of the Garden of Eden, “believed by most to be the birthplace of civilization and by some to be the birthplace of humanity” (Mountjoy 2005: 2), which is globally known as Mesopotamia.²²

²⁰ Although the Euphrates and Tigris rivers are joined together and flow, next to the border of Iran, into the Persian Gulf, the water of these rivers is not as important for Iran as it is for Syria and Iraq. The two rivers play a significant role in Turkey, Syria and Iraq, and the agriculture of all three countries has been dependent on these rivers for thousands of years. However, the Euphrates’ water is the most important source of Syria’s domestic consumption, industry and agriculture (Schulz 1995:100).

²¹ Cizre city has a privileged place for the Kurds because of the story of ‘Mem and Zin’ (Mem u Zin), an epic Kurdish romantic drama, a tragic love story similar to William Shakespeare’s ‘Romeo and Juliet’. The oral versions of ‘Mem and Zin’ were put in writing by Ehmede Khani in 1692 (Van Bruinessen 1992; Meho 1997).

²² Ancient Mesopotamia is located between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers and, in the modern world, lies within the geographical areas of Syria, Iraq and Turkey.



www.ancientmesopotamians.com (Accessed 15 April 2015)

Map 2.2. The map shows how ancient Mesopotamia encompassed the land between the two rivers, Tigris and Euphrates, an area commonly believed to be the cradle of civilization.

It was on these ancient Mesopotamian rivers that the Sumerians introduced the world's first arches and writing systems, built cities, potter's wheels, metalworks, wheeled carts, the science of mathematics and astronomy (Stansfield 2007) and key inventions that helped transform the way humankind lived and developed. The Sumerians also constructed dams and dug canals for cultivating their crops and providing economic benefits, and they achieved military, commercial and political advantages in the regions around these rivers. It is believed that "the introduction of law and government came about in Sumerian culture because of large-scale irrigation projects that required a complex working relationship among many people" (Mountjoy 2005: 17).

Sumerians believed that since water was so close to the surface, the earth was simply a large disk floating on the sea, or *Nammu*. From the eternal Nammu came fish, birds, and any animals they saw in the marshlands. Because they viewed Nammu as a god, in their view of creation, water was the source of all life. Considering their

location in the arid land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and their dependence upon those rivers for life, this creation view, which denotes the importance of water, mirrors their experience in Mesopotamia (Mountjoy 2005: 25).

Sumerian civilization laid the foundations for later societies and advanced development in agricultural productivity, the domestication of cattle and of sedentary life and social organization along the sacred banks of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. In addition, many of the great cities of ancient times stood on or near the Euphrates and Tigris rivers (including some which still exist); the Assyrian capitals of Asshur, Nimrud and Ninevah, the Sumerian cities of Nippur and Ur, the ancient cities of Ashur, Calah and Nineveh, the Median city of Amed (known as the capital of Kurdistan to the Kurdish, located in south-east Turkey), and the Abbasid towns of Baghdad, Samarra and Mosul all flourished on the banks of the two rivers (Kolars and Mitchell 1991). The waters of these ancient rivers have not only played a significant role in cultural identity but also the religious beliefs of mankind, hosting some of the earliest advanced civilizations of the world. Notwithstanding, in the face of opposition from historians, archaeologists and environmental groups, both domestic and foreign, the Turkish state has constructed its massive dams project, GAP, on these ancient rivers.



www.gap.gov.tr (22 May 2015)

2.2.3. The south-eastern provinces and the location of the GAP project

The GAP project, which is a “combination of twenty-five sub-irrigation systems, twenty-two dams and nineteen hydroelectric power plants on the Tigris-Euphrates” river basins (Kliot 1994: 125), is one of the largest of its kind in the whole world and is located in the south-east of Turkey. The GAP region covers an area as large as Belgium, equivalent to one quarter of Italy or one third of England. Encompassing nine provinces, the region covers 75,193 square km or 9.7% of Turkey’s total territory. The region comprises nine cities, 80 towns and 4,297 villages, and contains about 10% of Turkey’s population. It is bordered by Iraq and Syria, and contains the world’s largest settlement of Kurds, not only in the south-east of Turkey but also across the border in Syria and Iraq (Kliot 1994). Although there are Turks, Arabs and other ethnic minorities in the region, the majority of the population are Kurds. This heavily populated Kurdish region has always had a proportionally tense relationship with the Turkish state (see Chapter Three).

The names of the nine provinces of the GAP region are: Adiyaman, Batman, Diyarbakir, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Siirt, Sanliurfa and Sirnak. It is crucial to shed a light on the overall view of these provinces, since they are in the heart of the GAP project, which I believe it will increase us a wider knowledge not only on the region but also the region’s socio-economic factors. The city of Adiyaman is located between Eastern Anatolia and the South-Eastern Anatolia region, and is in the middle of the Euphrates region. Adiyaman’s economy is mainly based on agricultural products such as chickpeas, wheat, lentils, cotton, tobacco, grapes and peanuts. The industrial development of Adiyaman has not been expanded except for a few state institutions such as Sumerbank (cotton Industry Enterprise), milk and cement factories. Batman, situated near the ancient city of Hasakeyf, is one of the richest oil providers in the south-east. Batman’s economy is mainly based on oil and agriculture. As in Adiyaman, industry has not flourished much in Batman. Despite the fact that the city holds rich oil reserves, which meet one fifth of the oil needs of the country, the city is mainly reliant on agriculture. Unlike its neighbouring cities, Batman has little historical texture apart from Hasankeyf, which is located in the city’s provincial territory. Diyarbakir, one of the biggest Kurdish cities, is located in Upper Mesopotamia, on the bank of the Tigris, and is one of the most significant settlements in the south-east of Turkey. The city is generally considered to be the (unofficial) capital city of Kurdistan. Its economy is based on agriculture, stockbreeding and industry. As a consequence of the war between the PKK and the Turkish state,

migration to the city has risen substantially, and this, combined with the current sluggish economy of the city, has resulted in unemployment rates of over 30%, with literacy and health statistics far below the country's average. Gaziantep, like Diyarbakir, is one of the most important provinces in historical terms. It is located in South Eastern Anatolia, between the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia. Gaziantep is the only city in the GAP region that, with its well-developed industrial and commercial organization, contributes to the Turkish economy. The province of Kilis is located near the Syrian border, between the Mediterranean and the south-east. Kilis's economy, like other provinces in the region, is based on agriculture, and olives and grapes are the main products. Mardin is a significant ancient city, its economy again being mainly based on agriculture. Despite the city being a candidate for UNESCO's list of 'Cities of World Heritage', its socio-economic conditions are among the most backward in the south-east region. Siirt is located in South-Eastern Anatolia, and the city is surrounded by mountains with plateaus. It is one of the most significant impound basins of the Tigris River, and its main economy, like other cities in the region, is based on agriculture and livestock. The city of Sanliurfa or Urfa occupies a unique place in the history of the region. It is a centre for many religions. Urfa was chosen as the centre for the GAP project. The first international airport in the region and the regional GAP headquarters were built here. The Ataturk dam with its water tunnels delivers water to the city's dry land, such as the Harran Plain. So, Sanliurfa, with the completion of the Ataturk dam, has benefited economically to some extent. Sirnak is situated on the high mountain of Judi. The economy of the city is the least developed in the region and the city has not industrialized at all. Sirnak mainly relies on agriculture and livestock breeding (see more in a report by the 'National Industrialists and Businessmen's Association' or *Ulusal Sanayici ve Isadamlar Dernegi* (USİAD 2008); Kolars and Mitchell 1991; GAP Action Plan and Review Report 2008; *Can Suyu: GAP*, published as a book by GAP Regional Directory 2010).

2.2.4. GAP organization, dams and the capacity of power generation and irrigation

"For organizational convenience, the GAP is divided into the Euphrates and Tigris development plans" (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 19). The GAP project comprises 13

main irrigation and energy schemes, “7 of which are on the Euphrates River (Lower Euphrates, Karakaya, Euphrates Border, Suruc-Baziki, Adiyaman-Kihta, Gaziantep-Araban, Gaziantep) and 6 on the Tigris (Tigris-Kralkizi, Batman, Batman-Silvan, Garzan, Ilisu, Cizre” (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 19).

Euphrates	Tigris
Karakaya Dam	Dicle - Kralkızı
Lower Euphrates	Batman
Euphrates Border	Batman - Silvan
Suruç - Yaylak	Garzan
Adiyaman - Kahta	Ilisu
Adiyaman – Göksu -Araban	Cizre
Gaziantep	

Table 2.1 shows the planned energy capacity and irrigation potential of 22 dams on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. There are other sub-dam projects, but this study only deals with the main dams which are planned under the GAP administration.

Euphrates River	Install capacity (MW)	Energy production (GWh/yr)	Irrigation area (ha)
Karakaya Dam	1,800	7,354	—
Lower Euphrates	2,450	9,024	689,749
Euphrates Border	852	3,168	—
Suruç - Yaylak	—	—	113,136
Adiyaman - Kahta	195	509	81,130
Adiyaman – Göksu - Araban	7	43	71,589
Gaziantep	—	—	144,064
Total	5,304	20,098	1,099,677
Additional individual projects	14	42	62,830

Tigris River	Install capacity (MW)	Energy production (GWh/yr)	Irrigation area (ha)
Dicle - Kralkızı	204	444	130,159
Batman	198	483	37,351
Batman - Silvan	240	964	245,372
Garzan	90	315	60,000
Ilisu	1,200	3,833	—
Cizre	240	1,280	121,000
Total	2,172	7,247	593,882
Additional individual projects	—	—	36,548
Total of 13 sub-projects	7,490	27,387	1,792,937

DSI General Directory 2010/www. gap.gov.tr (Accessed 20 January 2010).

Table 2.1

As table 2.1 shows, Turkey planned to construct 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric power plants, and intended to irrigate 1.8 million hectares of land. It is important to note that 9.7% of Turkey's earth potential and 20% of its economically irrigable land is located in the GAP region.²³

That 20% of irrigable land could potentially be increased by 50%, which could then “more than quadruple the gross regional product” (Ünver 1994: 30). Moreover, the region as a whole could “provide about 28% of all national water supply by rivers” (Ünver 1994: 28). Despite the fact that only 9.7% of Turkey's earth potential is in the south-east, this amount of land could provide most of the country with fresh water, food, power and economic advancement if it is carefully used, which makes GAP one of the most ambitious development projects since the creation of modern Turkey. Furthermore, it is anticipated that the project will generate over 27 billion GWh of electricity annually, doubling Turkish hydroelectric production.

²³ For more see, gap.gov.tr/files/ek-dosyalar/gap/gap-son-durum-2010 (accessed 20 January 2010).



www.kurdishherald.com (Accessed 11 May 2015).

Map 2.3.

2.2.5. The location of the 22 dams on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers included in the GAP project.

In order to understand the GAP project as a whole, I will now discuss each of these dams, not only their locations but also their descriptions and current conditions. It is crucial to examine these dams in detail, since they are the core foundation of the GAP project, and doing so will give us a clearer idea of their impact in the region. The next section describes each dam, starting with those on the Euphrates, and followed by the Tigris dams.

2.2.5a. Dams on the Euphrates

Karakaya Dam

The Karakaya Dam is the second most important dam on the Euphrates River in the south-east region. It is near Cungus in the Diyarbakir province. It is also located near the Keban Dam, which is about 167 km downstream. The Keban Dam is located near the town of Keban on the upper Euphrates, and is the first major Turkish water development programme, which involved a contract for construction “between the Turkish government and SCI-Impreglio, a Franco-Italian consortium” (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 26). By 1975, the Keban Dam was completed and generating power, and it is considered to be the best source of hydroelectric power in Turkey. When the dam was completed, it almost “doubled the electricity produced in Turkey at the time” (Langer 2009: 4). It was also the first such project to have led to wide-scale displacement, as around 25,000 local people were subjected to enforced resettlement from the site (Kliot 1994; Öktem 2002). However, since the Keban Dam is not officially part of the GAP project (Kliot 1994: 126), we are not examining it in more detail.

Construction of the Karakaya Dam began in 1967, and it was completed in 1988. It is a concrete arch-gravity dam, 187 metres high, 462 metres long, and its reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 268 square km. The total install capacity of the dam is 1,800 MW and its power generation is 7,354 GWh annually.²⁴ The flooding involved in creating the Karakaya Dam affected over 100 villages with 249 families (Ghassemi and White 2007), and it was the second dam that led to mass displacement of people, in this case at least 15,000.

The Karakaya Dam was given the go-ahead before the GAP project was initiated, and it was built for energy production only. This dam, like the Keban Dam, could not be beneficial to the region’s development in terms of irrigation, but it provides energy production for the whole country via an interconnected system. However, when the GAP project was implemented in the region, Karakaya was incorporated in it as a gesture of reward.

²⁴ See Devlet Su Isleri Genel Müdürlü Baraj Detay, www2.dsi.gov.tr/baraj/detay.cfm?BarajID=104 (accessed 12 February 2015).

Atatürk Dam

The Atatürk Dam is one of the largest dams in the world. This ambitious project is one of the largest in GAP and, as Kliot (1994: 126) puts it, is certainly the ‘Jewel in the Crown’ of the project. The dam is located on the border of Adiyaman and Sanliurfa cities, on the Euphrates River (Langer: 6). It is over 180 km downstream from the Karakaya Dam and near to the town of Bozova. Construction started in 1983 and it was completed in 1990. It is “180 m high clay core and rock-filled wall [and] impound[s] an 817 sq. km lake with a volume of 48.7 Mm³” (Kolars and Mitchel 1991: 38).

The main purpose of the Atatürk Dam, as stated by the government agency responsible, was irrigation and electricity production in the GAP region.²⁵ The dam’s power production capacity is 2,450 MW and is the largest of a series of 19 power plants belonging to GAP. It produces 8,900 GWh of power annually. The dam can irrigate over 700,000 hectares, which makes “it the first or second largest irrigation from a single source scheme in the world” (Ibid: 38).

Two major irrigation tunnels, the ‘Sanliurfa Tunnels’, discharge water from the reservoir (each with a diameter of 7.62 metres and length of 26.4 km) into the Harran plain in Sanliurfa province. Water from these tunnels enables Harran to produce over 400,000 metric tons of cotton, nearly 60% of the nation’s entire cotton production. So GAP, as a consequence of the Atatürk Dam’s irrigation capacity, is the regional leader in terms of agricultural production in Turkey and can contribute 50% of the country’s food production. All the dams have had some negative impact on the local population and historical sites, but the impact of the Atatürk Dam has been substantially greater. With the completion of the dam, over 30,000 people have been displaced (Kliot 1994), and many archaeological sites, historical villages and towns flooded. The construction of the dam also led to geopolitical disputes. When Turkey stopped the flow of the Euphrates River in order to fill the dam, a process which took three months, “Turkey was accused by the downstream countries of violating international law, being insensitive to the water requirements of downstream

²⁵ See Devlet Su Isleri Genel Müdürlüğü Baraj Detay, www2.dsi.gov.tr/baraj/detay.cfm?BarajID=104; see also www.dsi.gov.tr (accessed 12 February 2015).

countries” (Altinbilek 2000: 327). In particular, Syria “protested that Turkish interventions damaged Syrian agriculture and water supply, and wrote angry letters not only to the Turkish government but also to foreign investors and constructors involved in GAP projects” (Warner 2008: 283).

Birecik Dam

The Birecik Dam is the fourth largest dam on the Euphrates. It is situated 30 km upstream from the Turkish-Syrian border, about 100 km downstream from the Atatürk Dam, and over 8 km upstream from Birecik town in Sanliurfa province (Kliot 1994). The construction of the Birecik began in 1997, and by 2001 it was fully completed. The structure of the dam consists of a concrete gravity and clay core sand gravel fill. The dam’s volume is 9,400 cubic m. The height, from the riverbed, is 63 metres and the volume of the reservoir at normal water surface elevation is 1,220 cubic m. The reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 56 square km.²⁶

The dam is built for the purpose of irrigating land close to the Syrian border and for power generation (Soffer 1999: 93). Its annual energy output is 2.5 billion kw, with a power output of 672 MW, and its irrigation area is over 92,700 hectares. In terms of negative impact, it has affected 44 settlements and displaced 30,000 people. When the flood caused by the dam began, nine villages were destroyed; “impoundment also had its partial effects in 3 more villages and a part of the town of Halfeti. The dam also affected farmlands of 31 more villages while leaving the settlements intact.”²⁷ Furthermore, the dam also flooded many ancient cities.

Karkamis Dam

Karkamis is located near the town of Karkamis in Gaziantep province, where the border checkpoint takes place between Syria and Turkey. It is built on the Euphrates River, downstream from the Birecik Dam, and is about 4.5 km away from the Syrian border. Construction began in 1996 and was completed in 2000. It is an embankment

²⁶ See more at www2.dsi.gov.tr/baraj/detay.cfm?BarajID=104; see also www.DSI.gov.tr. (accessed 12 February 2015)

²⁷ See ‘Fiziksel Planlama Çalışmaları, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/fiziksel_planlama_calismalari.aspx; or see www.gap.gov.tr for more information (accessed 18 March 2015).

dam (concrete section), 21.2 metres high, with a volume of 210,000 cubic metres. Its reservoir capacity is 157,000 cubic metres and its surface area is 28.4 square km (Kliot 1994; Kolars and Mitchell 1991).

The Karkamis Dam is for hydroelectric power plants only, its capacity is over 180 MW and it produces 652.5 GWh annually. It is considered to be “be the fifth dam on the Euphrates and serves as a complementary project to the Birecik Dam” (Kliot 1994: 129). Karkamis town (or Girgames in Kurdish) is one of the world’s most ancient cities, dating back to 300 BC, and is believed to be the place where the world’s first written peace treaty, the Treaty of Kades between Ramses II and Hattusili III, was signed. Recent mine clearing operations (2010-11) between the Syrian and Turkish borders enabled excavations by archaeologists from Italy and Japan to take place.²⁸ Although this dam is not as important as the Atatürk or Birecik, its position near the border with Syria makes it more interesting in terms of security issues.

Camgazi Dam

The Camgazi Dam, which is located in the west at a distance of 17 km from Adiyaman province, was constructed on the Doyran and Kuzgun rivers. It was completed in 1999. The dam has a volume of 5,512 cubic metres. The height, from the riverbed, is 45 metres and the volume of the reservoir at normal water surface elevation is 56 cubic hm. The reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 6 square km. The dam was constructed for irrigation only, and its irrigation area is 6,532 hectares. Although this dam may not be used for energy production, it is of vital importance to irrigation, which, as the governor of Adiyaman, Ramazan Sodan, said, would bring a net profit of 20 million Turkish lira to the farmers of the city.²⁹ Such a dam might be smaller than the Atatürk Dam, but all the dams in the region are potentially golden projects for future food production if Turkey were to make this a priority.

²⁸ See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 3 June 2014). See also Kolars and Mitchell (1991), *The Euphrates River and the Southeast Anatolia Development Project*; Turkey. Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2007), *The Ascending Place of Light: GAP (Southeast Anatolia Region)*.

²⁹ See *Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü*, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi20/Adiyaman.htm, or www.haritamap.com (accessed 2 October 2015).

Hancagiz Dam

Hancagiz Dam is located in Nizip town in the Gaziantep province, on Nizip River. The construction of the dam started in 1985 and was completed by 1989. The dam has a volume of 3,600 cubic metres. The height, from the riverbed, is 45.5 metres and its reservoir volume at normal water surface elevation is 100 cubic hm. The dam's reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 7.5 square km. Hancagiz Dam, like Camgazi Dam, was built for the purpose of irrigation, and irrigates 6,945 hectares in Barak plain 10 km away from Nizip town.³⁰

Kayacik Dam

The construction of the Kayacik Dam began in 1993 and was completed by 2005 as part of the GAP project. The height of this dam is 45 metres and it has a volume of 1,853 cubic metres. Its reservoir volume at normal water surface elevation is 117 cubic hm, and the area of the reservoir at normal water surface elevation is 11 square km. The dam is located in Gaziantep province, on the Afrin River, one of the two streams that join south of the city to form the Sajur River, which originates in Turkey and flows into the Euphrates in Syrian territory. Though the dam has not had a major impact on historical sites and human life, it affects the flow of water into Syrian territory. Kayacik Dam, like Hancagiz and Camgazi Dams, is built for irrigation only, and can irrigate an area of 10,400 hectares.³¹

Gömükan Dam

The Gömükan Dam, with an area of 7.762 hectares, is under construction. The stated intention of the project is to generate water for Adiyaman city, providing 31.5 cubic hm annually. The dam will affect thousands of local people's livelihoods and will

³⁰ See 'Hancağız Barajı - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü', www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi20/Gaziantep.htm, or Hancağız Barajı'nda patlama (accessed 2 October 2015: 2 kişi enkaz altında - Milliyet, www.milliyet.com.tr/hancagiz-baraji.../default.htm; see also www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 2 October 2015).

³¹ See Kayacık Barajı - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi20/Gaziantep.htm; see also Kayacık Barajı Nerede Haritası Oğuzeli Gaziantep, www.haritamap.com/Gaziantep (accessed 23 October 2013).

destroy many settlements. The Turkish government, without considering local thoughts on the project, is building this dam for water security only.³² Despite the government claiming that the dam is mainly intended to provide fresh water for the city, its main concern is to create an extra water provider for the Camgazi Dam in the event of any future drought.

Kocali Dam

The Kocali Dam has been in the process of construction since 1988, though it was hoped that it would be completed by 2014. The hydroelectric plant's capacity will be 40 MW and its power generation will be 120 GWh annually. The project will have the capacity to irrigate 21,605 hectares. It is not only intended for irrigation and power production but also, like Gömükan Dam, will provide water to Adiyaman (31.5 cubic hm/yıl (1.0 m³/s)).³³

Sirimtas Dam

The construction of the Sirimtas Dam has begun and some digging is in progress. The dam is located in Adiyaman province. The capacity of the dam is 28 WM and its hydroelectric plant will generate 87 GWh annually.³⁴

Büyükçay Dam

The Büyükçay Dam is located in Adiyaman province and is under construction as part of the Adiyaman Kahta project. This dam is intended for electricity production and irrigation. The capacity of the dam is 30 MW and its power generation is 84 GWh annually. The project is intended to irrigate an area of 12,322 hectares annually.³⁵

³² See Doğan, Koçali Ve Gömükan Barajı İle İlgili Açıklama Yaptı, [www.haber3.com/Son Gelişmeler](http://www.haber3.com/Son-Gelistmeler) (accessed 23 October 2013).

³³ See more at AK Parti'li Aydın, Koçali Barajı İnşaatında, www.milliyet.com.tr/ak-parti-li-aydin-kocali-baraji-ins (accessed 6 May 2015); Koçali Barajı İnşaatı Sözleşmesi İmzalandı, www.dsi.gov.tr/Haberler (accessed 11 November 2014).

³⁴ See more in Sincik Sırımtaş Barajında Su Tutulmaya Başlandı - Haber, www.haberler.com/Haber (accessed 9 May 2013); see also www.gap.gov.tr.

³⁵ See more in Güncel Haberler: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Orman ve Su İşleri, [www.ormansu.gov.tr/.../Orman_ve_Su_İşleri_Bakanı](http://www.ormansu.gov.tr/.../Orman_ve_Su_Isleri_Bakanı) (accessed 17 November 2012);

Kahta Dam

The Kahta Dam is located near Kahta town in Adiyaman province. This project on the Euphrates River will irrigate over 77,000 hectares and generate 196 MW of electricity.³⁶

Çataltepe Dam

The Çataltepe or Çetintepe Dam is planned but construction has not yet begun. It is intended only for irrigation, and will be considerably smaller than the other dams. It will be located near the border of Adiyaman province.³⁷

Kemlin Dam

“The minimum reservoir capacity of the Kemlin Dam is 2.78 cubiMm³, its effective reservoir capacity is 31.72Mm³” (Kolars and Mitchel 1991: 111), and the plan is for the dam to be located in Gaziantep province near the border with Syria. Kemlin Dam, like Çataltepe, will be considerably smaller than the others, and the plans for construction still exist only in the GAP Master Plan.

Of the above 14 dams on the Euphrates, seven have been completed. These seven are the most profitable dams compared with the unfinished ones; Karakaya, Birecik and particularly Atatürk Dam are the core projects in terms of irrigation and, in particular, hydropower plants. However, a further eight of the twenty-two dams listed in the project lie on the Tigris River, as described below.

www.milliyet.com.tr/ahmet-aydin-dan-buyukcay-muj (accessed 5 December 2014).

³⁶ See DSI Genel Müdürlüğü - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www.dsi.gov.tr/docs/hizmet.../tarim_sulama.pdf (accessed 5 December 2014).

³⁷ Çetintepe Barajı İnşaatında Göksu Çayı Derivasyon, www.dsi.gov.tr/Haberler (accessed 14 August 2014); çataltepe barajı dolgu malzemelerinin genel özellikleri-nı ıgiriş, oaji.net/articles/2014/1084-1415287282.pdf (accessed 14 August 2014).

2.2.5b. Dams on the Tigris

Kralkizi Dam

Kralkizi Dam is located on the Maden tributary of the Tigris, which is situated between the city of Batman and Diyarbakir province. The type of dam is earth-fill, its height is 113 m. Its reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 1,300 square km. The dam's total install capacity is 94 MW and its power generation is 146 GWh annually. The construction of the dam began in the mid-1980s and it was completed in 1997.³⁸ Although the Kiralkizi Dam was presented as an integrated regional development project, its main purpose, like the Keban and Karakaya Dams, was to generate power production for the whole country.

Dicle Dam

The Dicle Dam is located in Diyarbakir province, over 20 km downstream of the Kralkizi Dam. Construction began in 1986, and by 1997 the dam was completed (Soffer 1999). The height of the dam is 75 metres and its reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 24 square km. The dam has an installed hydroelectric capacity of 110 MW and it is intended to produce 296 GWh of electricity annually.³⁹ While the dam is designed for power production, it is also intended to irrigate an area of 128,080 hectares, as well as providing over 80% of the drinking water for Diyarbakir city.

Batman Dam

³⁸ See Kralkızı Barajı HES - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi10/diyarbakir.htm (accessed 13 May 2013).

³⁹ See Dicle Barajı HES - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi10/diyarbakir.htm (accessed 13 May 2013).

This project is located in Batman province on the Batman River, which is a major tributary of the Tigris. Batman Dam is 85 metres high and its reservoir area at normal water surface elevation is 49.25 square km.⁴⁰ The dam has a capacity of 185 MW, and is expected to annually generate 483 GWh of power. The irrigation system is still included in the programme, and should be able to offer 37,744 hectares of irrigation once it begins to deliver water. Work on the project started in 1986, and it was completed in 1999 (Soffer 1999).

Ilisu Dam

The \$1.5 billion Ilisu project, located in Ilisu village on the Tigris River between Mardin and Sirnak, is now under construction. It is located 65 km upstream of the Syrian and Iraqi border. The dam is 1,820 metres long and 135 metres high. The dam is intended to create a reservoir with a maximum volume of 10.4 billion cubic metres and a surface area of 313 square km (Rohr 1999: 1). This dam is the largest hydro-power project in Turkey, has the capacity of a 1,200 MW power station, and is expected to produce 3,800 GWh of hydroelectric power annually (Bosshard 1998). This hydroelectric based power plant project will have huge negative impact, not only on historical sites and human life, but also on the natural environment. It is claimed that the dam will “require the forced resettlement of close to 34,000 people [...] and could negatively affect the lives of up to 78,000 people” (Langer 2009: 17).

Silvan Dam

This dam consists of a rock fill, and its height is 175.5 m; it is a concrete cover front face dam. The project is located in the district of Silvan town in Diyarbakir province, lying between Batman and Silvan (Kliot 1994: 130). The project’s power production capacity is 150 MW. It will produce 623 GWh power annually and is intended to irrigate 213,000 hectares of land. After the Atatürk Dam, the Silvan is the second largest dam in terms of irrigation in the GAP project framework. According to government statement mentioned in the official website that once the project is

⁴⁰ See Batman - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi10/batman.htm (accessed 13 May 2013).

completed, it will be in the position to provide substantial jobs for the locals. The dam is now under construction, and the government has promised to complete it by 2016.⁴¹ This will be one of the most important projects in terms of regional development within the framework of GAP.

Kayser Dam

The Kayser Dam has been planned but construction has not yet started. It is to be constructed on the Zore River, located on the border between Batman and Diyarbakir city. The dam will be built for power production and its total installed capacity will be 90 WM, and it will generate 341 GWh annually. When activated, it will flood many people's livelihoods, affecting 20 settlements, and destroying many fruit trees. All kinds of fruit which cannot be found in other places grow in the Zore River valley, including thousands of walnut trees. A variety of valuable kinds of vegetation grow. When flooding begins, all these fruits, trees and vegetation will disappear.⁴²

Garzan Dam

The construction of the Garzan Dam is in process. This project, which is located between the town of Silvan in Diyarbakir province and Siirt province, is located on the Garzan tributary, and is designed to produce 90 MW of electricity. It is argued that when the dam is completed, it will irrigate 60,000 hectares of land (Soffer 1999: 95).

Cizre Dam

This dam is located in the Silopi – Nusaybin – Cizre region, and it is also close to the junction of Turkey's borders with Syria and Iraq (Soffer 1999). The original tender for the dam was issued in 2008, and it was expected that it would be fully constructed by 2012, but it has not yet been completed. The dam is mainly for generating

⁴¹ See Silvan Barajı Bölgeye Hayat Verecek, www.dsi.gov.tr; Silvan Barajı, 318 bin kişiye iş imkanı sağlayacak – Hürriyet, www.Hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/25184875.asp (accessed 20 September 2014).

⁴² See Kayseri - Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü, www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi12/kayseri.htm; Baraj bu eşsiz doğayı yutacak - Batman Çağdaş, www.batmancagdas.com/baraj-bu-essiz-dogayi-yutaca (accessed 20 September 2014).

electricity, at a rate of 240 MW (Kliot 1994: 130). By the time it is completed, many villagers will have been deeply affected.

As I have outlined, there are fewer dams planned on the Tigris than on the Euphrates. While there are 14 dams on the Euphrates, on the Tigris there are only eight, and most of those on the Tigris have not been fully completed (only three out of eight, against seven out of 14 on the Euphrates). Having briefly described the dams here, I will investigate them in more detail, in order to assess their impact on the region, when I look at the GAP project's positive and negative effects in Chapter Five.

2.2.6. The current physical progress in the Irrigation and Hydroelectric Power Plant (HEPP) Project

Irrigated area:	1.8 billion hectares (ha)
Completed area:	340,535 ha (18.92%)
Under construction:	63,955 ha (3.56%)
Planned area (remaining):	1,395,510 ha (77.52%)

The above figures indicate that the total irrigated area in the GAP region is 1.8 billion ha, and this was supposed to be completed by now according to the information from the Turkish government. As the figure shows, only 340,535 ha (18.92%) of land irrigation has been completed, whereas 1,395,510 ha (77.52%) of irrigation remains to be completed; as for the 63,955 ha (3.56%) of land for which irrigation projects are under construction, it is not yet known when these will be completed.⁴³

Completed (HEPP):	5,534 MW (74%)
Ready to proceed:	240 MW (3%)
Under construction:	1,200 MW (16%)
Remaining:	516 (7%)

So, based on 2011 data, progress in terms of irrigation is slow and almost nothing is

⁴³ For more detail see State Water Works (DSI) *General Directory 2011*, www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 11 May 2011).

happening, in contrast with the substantial progress in the generation of hydroelectric power. Since 2009, install capacity has reached 5,534 MW; that is, 74% of the project's hydroelectric production targets have been realized.⁴⁴

To recap, on completion the dams in the GAP project are expected to provide 50% of Turkey's water generation (Anderson 2000: 292). By the year 2010, nine main and one sub-project hydroelectric power plants have been completed, that is, 74% of hydroelectric power production, whereas irrigation remains under 19%. When the project is fully completed, Turkey hopes to gain hydroelectric capacity of over 7,500 MW, which will generate 27 million GWh of electricity a year, boosting Turkish electricity output by more than 70%. These figures would be achieved through GAP's anticipated "combination of twenty-five irrigation systems, twenty-two dams and nineteen hydroelectric power plants on the Tigris-Euphrates" river basins (Kliot 1994: 125).

The above sections have concentrated on the physicality of the GAP project; where the project receives its water and the potential of that water (from the Euphrates and Tigris rivers), and the importance of those rivers in the region. They have also included details of the location of the GAP project and descriptions of the 22 dams involved in the project, along with an analysis of its progress in terms of irrigation and hydroelectric power generation. The following section focuses on the organization and transformation of the project from water/land resources into a 'social development' project, and describes the aims of the project in this regard.

2.3. Origin of GAP and the formation of the social development project

2.3.1. Origins

It is important to note that the Euphrates and Tigris rivers were among the main interests of the Turkish policy-makers at the very beginning of the republic. In the early days of the republic, and in the aftermath of the Second World War in particular, Turkish policy-makers put serious effort into changing and developing all aspects of their new country, and electricity emerged as one of the urgent necessities to enable

⁴⁴ See GAP'ta Son Durum - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_ta_son_durum.aspx (accessed 2 February 2015).

the development of their newly constructed country. In order to utilize its water resources for the purpose of power production, Turkey established several organizations to survey the potential of these resources.⁴⁵

Despite the fact, as we pointed out in Chapter One, that the origin of Turkish water resource development began with the establishment of the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (DSI) in 1954, the idea of establishing such a large project goes further back, to the early era of the Turkish republic in the aftermath of the First World War.

The original concept regarding the rational utilization of the water resources of the Euphrates River emerged from the Turkish ‘Administration for Electricity Studies’ Electrical Resources Survey (*Elektrik Isleri Etut* (EIE)) in 1935 and, one year later, upon Kemal Atatürk’s directive, a survey was undertaken into the potential of both rivers for the purpose of power production.⁴⁶ Arising from the conclusions of the EIE water survey, in 1958, a further survey by the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (*Devlet Su Isleri* (DSI)) resulted in the drawing up of 13 projects, five on the Tigris and eight on the Euphrates, mainly for the purpose of energy production, but also for irrigation. These projects provided the foundations for the subsequent GAP project.

The Administration’s survey concentrated for a long period on aspects of the water flow, which were recorded by the observation stations along the course of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. The next stage was the launch by the DSI of its first studies within the framework of the Keban Dam in 1966, and in 1974 this dam was put into service for the purpose of power production. In 1976, the construction of the Karakaya Dam began, and in 1980 the Euphrates and Tigris projects were brought together under the name of the ‘Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP)’.⁴⁷ The Atatürk Dam, which was renamed in honour of Kemal Atatürk, the first president of the Turkish republic, began to be constructed in 1981 under the framework of GAP. In 1986, the task of running the GAP project was given to the State Planning Organization or *Devlet Planlama Teskilati* (DPT), with the remit of providing the framework for integrated regional development. In 1989, Turkey set up its GAP

⁴⁵ For more detail see State Water Works or Devlet Su Isleri (DSI) website www.dsi.gov.tr.

⁴⁶ See more in ‘*Can Suyu: GAP*’, published as a book by GAP Regional Directory (2010) p. xxvii.

⁴⁷ See more in ‘*Can Suyu: GAP*’, published as a book by GAP Regional Directory (2010).

Master Plan, under the Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA).

According to the regional director, Mehmet Acikgöz, whom I interviewed in his office at GAP headquarters in Sanliurfa: “developments in the world brought a new concept of development, and the insight of the GAP Master Plan, in 1989, has been created in line with global development” (personal interview, July 2011). Although in terms of Turkish energy needs, GAP was rooted in the 1930s, it has undergone periodic shifts from time to time, so that by 1989 it had become a ‘social development’ project, and it was intended to deal with the south-east region’s socio-economic situation through the GAP Master Plan. The plan was to be completed by 2005, and the whole project was regulated by the Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA) as discussed below.⁴⁸

2.3.2. Organization of the GAP Regional Development Administration

GAP Development Higher Council

1. Prime Minister
2. State Minister in charge of GAP
3. State Minister in charge of state planning organization
4. Minister in charge of public works and settlement
5. Minister of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

GAP Regional Administration

1. Headquarters Directorate
2. Regional Directorate
3. Coordinating Council

The GAP Higher Council is the highest decision making authority in the GAP organization. The Council is authorized to investigate and decide all kinds of plans, schemes and programmes developed by the project administration. “The Council is

⁴⁸ See more about the GAP Master Plan and the Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA) in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 8 April 2015).

composed of the Prime Minister or a State Minister acting on behalf of the Prime Minister, State Minister in charge of the State Planning Organization and the Minister of Public Works and Settlement.”⁴⁹ What is significant about the organizational role of the GAP Regional Development Administration is that it incorporates GAP into the highest level of state planning, thereby ensuring that the project is at the highest level of state policy. It regulates development under the prime minister and the state ministers, and the directors selected for this role in the project are highly knowledgeable not only about water issues or dams, but also about the geopolitics of the region.

2.4. Development of the GAP social development project under the GAP Master Plan

GAP, through its Master Plan, offered the most ambitious regional development project in the south-east region “by encompassing not only hydropower and irrigation infrastructure development as originally planned, but also all related sectors including industry, transportation, rural and urban infrastructure, environmental protection and social sectors in the [r]egion” (Altinbilek and Tortajada 2012: 173). The core objective of the Master Plan was to transform south-eastern Turkey into, as Kolars puts it, an 'Agro-related Export Base'. The aims of the plan, as defined by Kolars (1994: 66), were:

1. To raise income levels in the GAP region by improving the economic structure, in order to narrow the income disparity between this region and other regions.
2. To increase productivity and employment opportunities in rural areas.
3. To enhance the assimilative capacity of large cities in the region.
4. To contribute to the national objective of sustained economic growth, export promotion and social stability by efficient utilization of the region's resources.

⁴⁹ See ‘GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı’, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 22 March 2012).

The transformation of the project into a multi-sectoral and integrated regional social development programme for south-eastern Turkey, meant that the strategies involved in the GAP Master Plan were reconsidered. The plan focused on the centralized development of strategies around four basic components:

1. To develop and manage water resources and land resources for irrigation, domestic and also urban and industrial use.
2. To improve the region's soil use by introducing better agricultural practices, crop patterns and management.
3. To encourage private entrepreneurship and manufacturing industries by giving special weight to agriculture related and local resource based production lines.
4. To improve social services and urban infrastructure facilities and create opportunities for employment, with a view to persuading local populations to migrate to the cities, and to attract qualified personnel from the western Turkish cities into the region.

While the Master Plan provided aims and objectives for the implementation of the project, as an integrated regional social development programme, GAP needed action plans to achieve its targets. More specifically, the Master Plan was “a guide facilitating the integration and coordination of development efforts made by various governmental agencies” in the GAP region.⁵⁰

“Macro-level planning and management, coordination, monitoring, evaluation and implementation in selected areas are carried out by the GAP Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA) as well as other respective state agencies” (Ünver 1997: 459-60), in order to determine the south-east's potential and to identify blockages in the socio-economic development process, in an attempt to reach its development objectives, strategies and targets. In order to reach its targets, the Master Plan needed to incorporate social action plans.

2.4.1. GAP-Social Action Plan

⁵⁰ See more in ‘GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı’, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 20 May 2012).

Between 1992 and 1994, a series of regional surveys was conducted by experts in the South-Eastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA), who emphasized that a scheme of this size would have a significant impact on the existing social structure of the region. As a result of these surveys, the GAP Social Action Plan was created by GAP-RDA to provide a general framework, containing “basic policies, targets, strategies and implementation measures for ensuring the social development of the region through a human-faced approach” (Kibaroglu 2002: 177). The Action Plan was created for a five year period in order to interact “between sectors, population projections and spatial development forecasts on the basis of numerous studies” (Ünver 1997: 459-60). The Action Plan aimed at radical changes in the economic structures and improvement in the socio-economic situation, including increased production and issues related to the health service and education, including enrolment ratios in schools. These changes were targeted to take place by 2005.

Thus, “effectiveness in attaining project objectives is closely related to the extent to which this structure is appropriately taken into consideration of the project’s design and implementation stage, and the participation of the people living in the region” (Kibaroglu 2002: 177). According to the Turkish state, the aims were:⁵¹

1. To enhance the social structure: that is to increase the presence and influence of modern organizations and institutions with a view to removing those traditional ones which obstructed development; to build an infrastructure which would enable the local sub-culture to combine with the national culture; to support families and enhance intra-family relations.
2. To improve the efficiency of agricultural services by extending practical tasks to farmers’ organizations as well as to private ones; by changing the role of the government to provide more services; by investing public funds in education and training in the fields of basic research, education and vocational training; by ensuring that all farmers had access to quality information concerning their local conditions; by removing crop patterns, production

⁵¹ These five basic principles of the GAP Social Action Plan are referenced from my interviewee, the President of GAP, Karahocagil, July 2011, GAP Headquarters, Ankara. See more at www.gap.gov.tr (accessed March 2011).

relations, types of ownership and employment that obstructed dynamic development in agriculture; by assessing the most favourable sizes of farming enterprises in the region and by eliminating factors that prevented enterprises from reaching these sizes; by taking measures to preserve such communal land.

3. To bring down unemployment; to appeal to investors; to encourage women into the workplace; to increase income levels, which would help to ensure a balanced distribution of income; to support employment, health and the environment.
4. To increase the level of education, especially for girls; to ensure equal educational opportunities in all sections of the population and promote literacy; to support vocational and technical training; to raise the social and educational profile of women who remained marginalized.
5. To expand preventive health services and ensure people's access to them; to identify and prevent the health problems that might follow the expansion of irrigation in the region.

In addition to these aims, it was planned to follow demographic policies, which would encourage population movements so as to enhance the economic and social potential of the region, to encourage the concentration of the population in central villages and cities. Finally, it aimed to encourage the settlement of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes “whose living environments are continuously shrinking as a result of social and economic changes; to observe principles relating to social, economic and cultural development in the resettlement of communities affected by dam lakes.”⁵²

To summarize, GAP was designed as an extensive, multi-sector, integrated regional development project, which aimed at economic growth and regional development via a concentration “on industry, transportation, urban and rural infrastructure, environmental protection and social sectors such as employment generation, health, education, capacity building and gender equity (Altinbilek and Tortajada 2012: 193).

⁵² See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed in 2 March 2011); or, GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx.

In 1995, the Turkish state managed to convince international actors that the philosophy of GAP was to achieve sustainable socio-economic development, which was “adopted in the context of GAP activities upholding the principles of human development, participation, equality and fairness.”⁵³ A cooperative conference between the GAP administration and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) took place that year, which, as Carkoglu and Eder (2005: 167) revealed, laid the foundations for a joint GAP-UNDP programme for sustainable development in the GAP region and supported 29 different projects grouped under five headings to promote:

1. social sustainability and the development of social services
2. agricultural sustainability and increased agricultural productivity
3. local entrepreneurships and economically viable industrial growth
4. human settlements
5. optimal and sustainable utilization of natural resources

However, when the GAP-Social Action Plan of the early 1990s had still not succeeded in reaching its sustainable socio-economic development target by 2005, a further Social Action Plan was established in order to fulfil the objectives of the original plan. This five year plan ran from 2008 to 2012.

2.4.2. GAP Entrepreneur Support and Guidance Centres (*Bölgesel Kalkınmada Girişimcilğin Gelistirilmesi* (GAP-GIDEM))

The GAP Entrepreneur Support and Guidance Centres (*Bölgesel Kalkınmada Girişimcilğin Gelistirilmesi* (GAP-GIDEM)), created in 1996 and financed by EU grants, promoted private sector investments in GAP regions and provided consultancy services to entrepreneurs. The remit of GAP-GIDEM is “to operate as a sub-project within the framework of the GAP Regional Development Administration.”⁵⁴ Turkish

⁵³ See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 2 March 2011); or GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap-nedir.aspx (accessed 2 March 2011).

⁵⁴ See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 22 October 2011); or GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı

policy-makers wanted to increase, through exploitation of the substantial natural resources of the GAP region, its contribution to the Turkish national GDP, which only stood at about 5%. Moreover, the GAP region contains 10% of the country's population, but the region's share in industrial value is much lower than the 5% of GDP. Only about 3.4 % of Turkish enterprises in manufacturing industry are situated in the south-east region.⁵⁵

Therefore the Turkish state was attempting to enable the region to catch up through the GAP project by providing such resources as the GAP-GIDEM, through which Turkey has been aiming to extend information and consulting services to local, national and international entrepreneurs who plan to launch investments in the region. According to Turkish GAP policy-makers, "The increase in agricultural output can only be sustainable if the additional revenues, derived through the realisation of GAP, are channeled to feasible investments. It is therefore inevitable to improve the entrepreneurial and managerial capacities of local businesses."⁵⁶ In short, the above statements indicate that once all the principles of GAP 'social development' projects begin to function, there would be no reason why the project should not achieve its main target of enhancing the south-east's socio-economic status, and this is an issue which this study investigates.

2.4.3. Multi-Purpose Community Centres (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri* (ÇATOM))

According to the GAP official website, CATOM was initiated in 1995 with one centre and has now expanded to 40 centres in the nine provinces of the GAP region.⁵⁷

GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 2 March 2011).

⁵⁵ See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 22 October 2011); or, GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx.

⁵⁶ [PDF] gap eylem planı inceleme ve değerlendirme raporu - emo, www.emo.org.tr/.../d73f5b6b5d8b428_ek.pdf?tipi... (*Türk Mühendis Ve Mimar Odaları Birliği* (TMMOB)) Diyarbakir İl Koordinasyon Kurulu [GAP Action Plan and Review Report: criticism and recommendations by Turkey Architectural Engineering and Coordination Centre, Diyarbakir Coordination Board]. See more in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 22 October 2011); or GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 22 October 2011).

⁵⁷ [PDF] gap eylem planı inceleme ve değerlendirme raporu - emo www.emo.org.tr/.../d73f5b6b5d8b428_ek.pdf?tipi... (*Türk Mühendis Ve Mimar Odaları Birliği* (TMMOB) Diyarbakir İl Koordinasyon Kurulu) GAP Action Plan and Review Report, Criticism Recommendations by Turkey Architectural Engineering and Coordination Centre, Diyarbakir

According to Adalet H. Akbas (personal interview, July 2011), the coordinator of the GAP social project, with particular responsibility for the activities of ÇATOM, these centres were mainly based in poor areas of the cities and their main aim was to assist women and young girls who had migrated from villages to the cities, offering them education and help with social problems. Our task, she said, “is to provide training courses on literacy, health, mother-child health, hygiene, nutrition and social activities - basically, to ensure the participation of women in public life.”

Another main aim was to draw women into GAP’s programme of development and programme management. GAP policy-makers were trying to slowly draw women into ÇATOM management, so that they could play their part in the ÇATOM community. ÇATOM’s target was to empower disadvantaged women who had migrated from villages to the suburbs of cities, and who had never had the chance to get access to the services that the state provided. The main objectives of ÇATOMs can be summarized, according to Akbas and the official website as follows:

1. Creating opportunities for women to become aware of their problems and launch initiatives for their solution,
2. Ensuring that women take part in the public sphere and benefit more from available services,
3. Enhancing female employment and entrepreneurship, contributing to equal opportunities by empowering women,
4. Starting the process of gender balanced development and developing replicable models relevant to local circumstances for participatory community development.⁵⁸

Through ÇATOMs’ social activities, the GAP policy-makers have tried to reach locals, in order to draw young girls and women into the centres. The strategy of the

Coordination Board; and [PDF] *Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği* (USİAD) GAP Raporu – National Industrialists’ and Businessmen’s Association, www.usiad.net/index.php?option=com...gap-raporu...raporlar... *GAP’ ta Ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler*. Editör: Dursun Yıldız. Hazırlayan: ADA Strateji. Mart - 2008. Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği. See also www.gap.gov.tr; or GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 22 October 2011).

⁵⁸ See more in www.gap.gov.tr; see also GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 22 October 2011).

ÇATOMs project was and is to contribute to an interdependent relationship between the local communities and the rest of Turkey.

In order to introduce such services to these disadvantaged women, Akbas said, “we go from door to door and tell locals how we work and what we provide, and tell them that if they were to join us, we would sort out their problems” (personal interview, July 2011). The concept of the ÇATOMs might appear to be based on a very holistic approach, if there were no political aspect to the project. Since the purpose of this chapter is to define and understand the structure of the GAP project, I will analyse it in terms of its politicization later in this thesis, (see Chapter Five and Six) and I will also examine to what extent ÇATOM centres have played a role in making progress in the context of GAP’s social development project.

2.4.4. GAP Youth House Centres (*GAP Gençlik Evleri*)

‘GAP Youth House Centres’ were mainly located in cities and aimed to create social activities and solve youth problems. The ‘GAP Youth House Centre’ project was launched in the region in 1999, like ÇATOM, as part of the ‘Social Action Plan’. The rise in the population of the GAP region and the increase in unemployment caused by resettlement (intensive rural to urban migration within the region), caused serious damage to families. Those most affected were young people.

According to the government and independent records,⁵⁹ the percentage of young people and children in the GAP region is significantly high, and above the country’s averages. The 2000 General Population Census shows that 41.8% of the population of the GAP region was aged 0-14, 54.7% were 15-64, and 4.1% were 65 and over, whereas the distribution of the total population of the country by the same age groups was, respectively, 29.9%, 64.3% and 5.6%.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ www.gap.gov.tr, Gençlik için sosyal gelişim projesi; [PDF] gap eylem planı inceleme ve değerlendirme raporu - emo, www.emo.org.tr/.../d73f5b6b5d8b428_ek.pdf?tipi... (*Türk Mühendis Ve Mimar Odaları Birliği* (TMMOB Diyarbakir İl Koordinasyon Kurulu) GAP Action Plan and Review Report, Criticism and Recommendations by Turkey Architectural Engineering and Coordination Centre, Diyarbakir Coordination Board; and [PDF] GAP Raporu - USiAD, www.usiad.net/index.php?option=com...gap-raporu...raporlar... *GAP'ta Ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler*. Editör: Dursun Yıldız. Hazırlayan: ADA Strateji. Mart - 2008. Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (accessed 22 October 2011).

⁶⁰ See more in www.gap.gov.tr, Gençlik için sosyal gelişim projesi (accessed 5 March 2013).

This pattern, in which the age group 0-14 constitutes a larger share of the population than the national average, makes it necessary to develop special policies and set targets for children and adolescents. Youth in general is the connection of any society to its future, and the most dynamic part of that society as well. The GAP region has a rather young and dynamic population composition. The proportion of the age group 15-24 to the total population of the region was 23%. In relation to GAP House Youth Centres, Adalet H. Akbas (personal interview, July 2011) stated:

To enhance communication among the youth, encourage their initiatives and organize action in various fields, thereby helping them to become active members of their communities. It was hoped that such a dynamic youth social project would create positive environments for youth and society.

Akbas stated that Turkey, under the GAP ‘social development’ project, received funds for ÇATOM centres from organizations under the United Nations umbrella, such as UNICEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) . She also told me that because they were part of the development project and had got a relationship with such organizations, they received a 47 million euro fund from the European Union. So, GAP ‘social development’ schemes have been perceived as internationally significant, with international actors such as the UN taking serious interest in the project. In this respect, GAP, with the incorporation of its social development perspectives, should not be perceived to be merely a national project but should also be seen in an international context. From this point of view, this study is concerned not only with the concept of the GAP, ‘social development’ project, but also, crucially, with its results.

2.4.5. GAP Child Development Centres (*Çocuk Gelişim Merkezleri*)

Child Development Centres were created in 2003, again based in the less developed area of south-east Turkey.⁶¹ The centres are mainly intended for socially disadvantaged children in the south-east, providing activities such as social development, reading, writing, sporting activities and assistance for such children.

⁶¹ See www.Milliyet.com.tr (accessed 6 May 2014).

The project is principally designed for children aged from 4 to 6 and from 7 to 14, mainly ones who had migrated from rural areas within the region. While the children between 4 and 6 are offered pre-school education, Turkish language and social development, children between 7 and 14 are mainly offered English, mathematics, Turkish, reading and writing, including workshops on computers, technology and the arts, cinema and theatre, folk dance and many other social activities. Child Development Centres are also intended to help children's parents understand how to help their children, how they should deal with disorderly children, and how to make sure that their children are developing their lives. The centres also support families who are not in a position to support their children by visiting them in their houses, providing a basic education and, if necessary, the members from the centres will teach parents writing and reading.⁶² They face criticism, according to my empirical work, on the grounds that such projects are too much focused on Turkish culture and society, not offering education based on local culture, and that this is part of Turkish policy for controlling the region. I will broaden the argument in Chapter Six, and assess whether there are such links between the social projects and Turkish policy in the region.

2.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter has examined the physicality, construction and historical background of the GAP project and the stated aim of the GAP 'social development' project in the south-east of Turkey. The main purpose of this chapter was not only to outline the structure of the project but also, most importantly for this study, to demonstrate how GAP, which was a technical land/water development project, was transformed into a 'social development' or integrated regional-social development project. In terms of the GAP 'social development' project, the chapter outlined the GAP-Master Plan and each of the programmes included in the project, helping us not only to grasp these social programmes, which were designed to diminish the longstanding backwardness of the south-east, but also to understand the whole nature of the project and its structure before we analyse its negative and positive progress, if not its mission.

Although I will investigate the progress of the project later in this study, this

⁶² See more at <http://www.gapcheetos.org/> (accessed 6 May 2014).

chapter has already indicated progress made in irrigation as well as in hydroelectric power generation, and noted crucially that while irrigation has barely progressed, the hydroelectric power plan has almost reached its target.

What is most significant is that, despite the GAP project appearing to focus on irrigation for the social development of the region rather than for electricity, at least at the beginning of the Master Plan, the historical paradigm indicates that, whatever Turkey was planning in 1935-6 for the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and whatever it is planning now, it follows its traditional policy. In the 1930s, and later in the 1950s, the idea was to utilize the water of these two rivers for power production to meet Turkish industrial needs; and it is evident now that Turkey, through the GAP project, has achieved 74% of the country's hydroelectric production, but the proportion of irrigated land remains under 19%, despite the fact that GAP was supposed to provide a development programme designed to raise people's income levels and living standards.

Accordingly, in the following chapter, I will paint a broad socio-political canvas and employ modernization/development theory from which to assess why and how the GAP 'social development' project has materialized and exactly what factors pushed Turkish policy-makers to propose such a project for the south-east, a region which had hitherto been socially and economically neglected.

CHAPTER THREE

Narrative of the south-east: political, socio-cultural and socio-economic aspects

3.1. Introduction

As this thesis examines GAP and its ‘social development’ project in the Kurdish south-east region of Turkey, in order to make the concept of the GAP social programmes more comprehensible it is important to outline the materialization of the ‘social development’ project in the framework of development/modernization theory and in the context of the south-east underdevelopment narrative factors. Thus, this chapter is divided into two sections, the first of which is primarily about Turkish–Kurdish relations in their historical framework and, in particular, the situation with regard to the socio-economic development of the south-east, as this region has been politically unstable for decades.

When Mustafa Kemal Atatürk built his new country out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, his followers and his state policy-makers focused on Turkey’s overall socio-economic situation, which seriously needed to be modernized. But while most of the country has benefited from the new economic development and has been successfully modernized, the south-east of Turkey has not been so lucky. The region has continued to live under tribal dynasties, and the people of the region have not been able to create their own independent socio-economic structure, mainly because of being a semi-feudal society and also on account of long term Turkish politics in the region. Hence, this chapter examines to what extent political instability, volatile historical Turkish-Kurdish relations, Turkish policy towards the Kurds in the region, and the structure of the region’s social formation have played a role in pushing the south-east further into underdevelopment.

The second section explores the materialization of the GAP ‘social development’ project in the context of modernization/development, which will lead us to theoretical and practical explanations of what we mean by the word ‘development’, and to what extent GAP has been formulated within that framework.

However, before examining Turkish-Kurdish relations, the historical background of

Turkish politics in the south-east, the state of the region's political and socio-economic paradigm and analyzing GAP's 'social development' project in the lens of development/modernization theory, it is appropriate to present a review of the most relevant literature on development/modernization in Turkey. So the chapter begins by reviewing literature looking at the formation of the Turkish state, which itself is considered to be a part of the modernization process. The literature focuses on reviewing the ways in which Turkey has become modernized/developed via its nation-state regime, by leaving traditional society behind and creating secularity, rationality and a modern industrial economy.

Secondly, the chapter examines post-war Turkish-Kurdish relations and Kurdish uprisings against the new Turkish republic's policies in their region.

The third section focuses on the socio-economic situation of the south-east region, including consideration of the Kurdish social structure and Turkish policy in the region, to see whether these two issues have any role in the region's socio-economic situation.

Fourthly, the chapter assesses development/modernization theory and explores the interrelation of GAP's social development project with the theory.

Finally, the chapter looks at critical approaches to modernization/development theory.

Examining all these issues will support this study of GAP, and will assist in clarifying not only the materialization of the GAP project and the overall longstanding historical narrative, but also its current status, as the main aim of this thesis is to reveal whether GAP has reached its key targets.

3.2. History of development and modernization in Turkey: from the foundation of the Turkish republic to the 1980s

In order to understand GAP's 'social development' programme and its success or failure, it is necessary to look at the historical background of Turkish development/modernization since the country's creation in 1923, to enlighten us as to why the country overall has been developed but the south-east has struggled. Despite the fact that in the 1920s the newly created Turkey had the massive task of reconstructing its economy, which was deeply damaged due to the Ottoman state's integration into the capitalist system as an open market, the newly created Turkish

republic managed to industrialize its new “country through joint investment with foreign capital as well as through the establishment of State Economic Enterprises” (Aydın 2005: 26). So, the crucial issue is that Turkey, since its creation in 1923, has been modernized/developed via its nation-state regime through leaving traditional society behind and creating secularity, rationality and a modern industrial economy.

Accordingly, as Henze (1993) states, ever since the end of the First World War, when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk built his new country out of the ashes of the Ottoman Empire, state and intellectual–bureaucratic elites in Turkey have pushed to introduce westernizing reforms in government and society. Atatürk, the first president of modern Turkey, wanted to establish the country on the basis of a European–type parliamentary system of government and as a member of Western civilization. Atatürk and his state policy-makers knew that leaving traditional society behind was not going to be easy for a society that had been living according to these customs for 700 years under the rule of the Ottoman Turks. In order to create a new society, secure the new Turkish state and to modernize, Atatürk believed that a republican regime would be the best formation for the future of Turkey, and this was constructed in 1923 based in the current Turkish capital, Ankara. In order to develop and strengthen his new state, Atatürk immediately objectified his reforms and the ideology of Kemalism (named after him - Kemal Atatürk). Kemalism was informed by six basic principles: nationalism, populism, republicanism, secularism, etatism and revolutionism were created to bring Turkey to a state of contemporary civilization, development/modernization, and to secure the state (Kili 1980; Akural 1984; Rumford 2003; Bozdağlıoğlu 2003).

The six principles are briefly explained as follows: although Atatürk witnessed the fact that radical nationalism had been problematic (such as Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and Francoist Spain), nationalism was the most crucial of these principles. First of all, unlike Arab nationalism, which intertwined with religion, Kemalist nationalism was secular. ‘Turkishness’ was not determined by one race, but by the degree a person associates himself with it (Kili 1980: 388). In Kemalist nationalism, everyone in Turkey was considered to be a Turk and there was no recognition of other ethnicities, such as Kurds. The core assumption of Kemalist ‘nationalism’ was based on securing the state and protecting Turkish independence, by which the Turkish state could achieve development/modernization. ‘Populism’, for Kemalists, was the crucial dominant mechanism to secure Kemalism: ‘populism’ demanded “a social system

based on work, and emphasized national unity both for national security and development” (Kili 1980: 388). Once Turkishness was developed, it was considered that all the threats to the Kemalist ideology would be easy to control. According to the principle of ‘republicanism’, Atatürk believed that a republic would be the best option to secure national sovereignty and would be the best option for the young generations of the new Turkey (Kili 1980; Akural 1984), who would take Turkey into the modernized world. Moreover, ‘secularism’ in Turkey must be understood differently from French secularism. To secure the unity of Turkey, Kemalist “‘secularism’ is a line of democratization between traditionalism and reformism” (Kili 1980: 391). Since Atatürk “viewed the caliphate as a threat to the security of his regime, and [...] abolished it in 1924” (Akural 1984: 126), the Muslim establishment has been under control of the Kemalist state, which religion could not challenge. In addition, although Kemalist state policy agreed to the functioning of a liberal market economy, according to Kemalist ‘etatism’, “the state was to regulate the general run of economic activity in areas in which private enterprise had proven to be inadequate, or if national interest required it” (Kili 1980: 391). As Kili (1980: 391) states: “Through ‘etatism’ the state acquired the right to interfere with, and to control the Turkish economy.” Finally, ‘revolutionism’ basically meant protecting the Kemalist principles and modernization was sure to be developed under Kemalist state formation. As Akural (1984: 141) states, “what Atatürk meant by revolution (*İnkılapçılık*) has never been sufficiently clarified.”

On the basis of these six constitutional precepts, the Turkish state was intended to create a secular unity between itself and the nation, thus the country would become a secular nation-state. In assessing Turkish modernization/development, it is impossible to ignore the fact that it was founded on these principles, and it is important to expand on these factors.

Rumford (2003) states that Kemalism was aimed at making Turkey a civilized and advanced modern society; because it was based on the premise that modernity equals progress, that is, on the creation of a modern nation through the introduction and dissemination of western reason and rationality into a society that was regarded as traditional and backward. Similarly, Keyman (2007: 221) points out that through the Kemalist nation-state, Turkey created secularity, rationality and a modern industrial economy. The concept of the nation-state, and its power to reshape a backward society into a secular-rational social model, “was seen as the key for the possibility to

enlighten the people and help them make progress” (Ibid) so that they would reach the standards of contemporary western civilization. Again, Bozdağlıoğlu (2003) argues that for the secular nation-state of Turkey, modernization meant westernization, which was viewed as successful, so traditional society was left behind and a modern western model was adopted.

When Atatürk died (1938), the Kemalist elite continued modernizing Turkey by constructing political and cultural institutions to attain a contemporary western standard of living, in other words, to establish a western civilization in the new Turkey. As Berkes (1964) describes, in order to achieve the standards of western civilization, the Kemalist elite began to demolish the socio-religious elite and Kurdish identity on the grounds that they were perceived as major threats to the unification of modern Turkey. For instance, the Kemalist state elite changed the written script to Roman letters, and banned traditional eastern dress, in order to turn the face of the new Turkey to the West. In addition to this, in order to achieve economic growth in both industry and agriculture, Turkey also designed a five-year development plan. By the 1930s, the world was in recession,⁶³ and this provided an opportunity for the newly formed Turkish state elite and the state policy-makers to seek development strategies. Aydın (2005: 27) defines this period as the Turkish etatist period (1930–39). Aydın (Ibid) comments on this period:

[The Turkish] state’s active involvement in capital accumulation and investment in economic enterprises took private interests into very careful consideration. However, the state entered into economic areas where private enterprise failed or was not strong enough, such as the building of infrastructural establishments, main industrial institutions, electrical power stations, railways and the iron and steel industry.

The Turkish state policy-makers could not pursue the idea of an organically integrated economy. Nevertheless, by the 1950s, Turkey’s integration into the global economy had been strengthened. Turkey was gradually joining western institutions,

⁶³ During the 1930s, the economic collapse that produced high unemployment and led the world into economic recession was broadly known as the Great Depression. Specifically, the Great Depression began when, in 1929, Wall Street crashed in the US, leading to international economic disorder, and a worldwide political and economic crisis. For more, see (Samuelson 1976; Williams 1994; Cargill and Mayer Aug, 1998).

and this forced the state to move away from etatist policies into a world market after the period of world recession which lasted until the end of the Second World War (Aydin 2005).

However, in 1950, when Turkey first moved from rule by a single party to multi-party democracy, the victorious Democratic Party “introduced a set of policies to pave the way for the liberalisation of the economy and to emphasise agricultural development as the engine of the economy” (Aydin 2005: 29). Subsequently, Turkey’s five-year development plans, in 1963–67, 1968–72 and 1973–77, created steady economic growth.

Although the new government adopted a liberal economy in the 1950s, since the foundation of the republic, Turkish modernization had been based on a ‘strong-state tradition’ (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005). This tradition manifested itself as the organizing ‘internal variable’ of Turkish politics, as “the state has assumed the capacity of acting almost completely independent from civil society, and [...] the state, rather than the government, has constituted ‘the primary context of politics’” (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005: 109). For instance, from 1923 to 1950, Turkey was run by a single-party regime, the party which Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) had established, known as the Republican People’s Party (RPP or CHP). Rule by the RPP lasted over 20 years. It was a single pro-state party era, during which period the military enjoyed controlling the state without fear of civilian intervention in military business. Twenty years later, the first competitive elections took place in 1946 between the Democratic Party (DP) and the RPP. The Democratic Party lost the election. There was some speculation that the state helped the RPP during the election, and, at that time, the DP did not have the power to argue for a re-election. In 1950, DP won the election.

However, Turkey subsequently had three military juntas, in 1960, 1971 and 1980, which consolidated the army’s political power by reinforcing its position to the point where no civilian political organization could oppose it. This had serious repercussions for the country economically and politically, and the south-east was the area most effected. The juntas not only harmed people as individuals, they damaged the national economy.

The military was not accustomed to being run by a civilian government, but did manage to keep its patience for ten years. During the 1960s the world had witnessed radical changes. On the one hand, decolonization of Third World countries took place, followed by revolutionary movements, and on the other hand, there was

the rise of a new concept in Western Europe, that of western democracy. All this affected Turkish people too, especially young students. The changes in the world and its effects in Turkey made the military fearful for its powerful position in Turkish politics. In 1960, Turkey experienced the first intervention by the military in politics. The 1960 coup was organized by middle-rank officers, and their excuse was the need to resolve a constitutional crisis.

From the time of the first intervention, the Turkish military entrenched its place in civilian politics. After the 1960 coup, through article 111 of the 1961 constitution, the military guaranteed its power over the Council of Ministers, a key body of the state for decision-making, including the coordination of all matters relating to national security. Ten years later, following the military intervention in 1971, force commanders “were made members of the Council, thereby enhancing the status of its military members” (Özbudun 2000: 108). Following the military intervention in 1971, freedom of speech, the right to form trade unions and the right of assembly were effectively eliminated. Furthermore, in 1972 the military began to terrorize the country. Many students, teachers, lawyers, journalists and trade unionists were arrested, imprisoned and tortured by order of the army commanders. The history of the 1971 coup is still in the mind of many Turkish people. People from the left-wing of politics were the most affected, and most of them left the country to become refugees in other part of the world, mainly in Europe.

In 1980, the third military junta took power. The 1980 military intervention in politics was quite different from previous ones in its wide-ranging impact. This coup brought radical changes to “social, economic and political structures – including laws regarding political parties, trade unions, ...public professional organisations, universities, radio and television” (Özbudun 2000: 26). As Özbudun argues (2000: 27), the intention of the regime was to “demobilize society at large, especially by outlawing all cooperation between political parties and other civil society institutions such as trade unions, professional organizations.”

Not only was this intervention a mark of Turkey’s political instability, but it had direct negative effects on the country’s economic health. Many business men and women began to take their businesses to other part of the world, because of the unpredictable political situation in the country. The 1980s military junta was another period which is still in many people’s minds in Turkey, and many are frightened that sooner or later the military will come back - this is a serious issue that Turkish people

live with every day. The 1980s military junta sank Turkey into deeper economic crisis; a high rate of inflation, a shortage of consumer goods and a foreign exchange shortage were all the result of the military's intervention in politics.

Additionally, the 1980s junta oversaw the drafting of a new constitution in 1982 which further entrenched the military in day-to-day Turkish politics. Under Article 118, it was declared that:

The National Security Council shall submit to the Council of Ministers its view on taking decisions and ensuring necessary cooperation with regard to the formation, determination, and implementation of the national security policy of the state. The Council of Ministers should give priority consideration to the decisions of the National Security Council concerning the measures it deems necessary for the preservation of the existence and independence of the state, the integrity and indivisibility of the country, and the peace and security of society (Özbudun 2000: 108).

This radical constitutional change allowed the military forces to legitimate their intervention in politics at any time in the name of national security. So, while the formation of the Turkish state was aimed at strengthening the Turkish economy and moving the country forward into the developed world, these direct military interventions had a serious socio-economic impact on Turkish society and the country itself (Gunay and Karatekelioglu 2005; Özbudun 2000; Robins 2003).

There is no doubt that military organizations have played an important role in establishing the social, political and economic conditions of the population. In particular, for people living in developing countries, the military is the only important actor, shaping the quality of their existence. But, this does not mean that the military will allow the population to express itself freely. As Fidal states, "Military leaders occupy key government positions and openly dictate national policy" (1975: 1), from dominating the media to controlling the public and private sectors.

However, resulting from a political spark set off in the 1970s in the world political economy, the post-1980s period saw the emergence of new actors, new meaning and new forms of modernization led by the neo-liberal developmentalization model for the world. Let me briefly discuss the neo-liberal concept of development and assess its impact on the Turkish politic and the role of the state, in particular in

the economy.

Brohman (1996) states,

by the end of the 1960s there were clear signs that ...[the] developmentalist paradigm had gone into decline and was rapidly being supplanted by a more orthodox neoclassical approach in major development sub-fields such as international trade, agricultural economics, and development planning.

However, the perspective on 'developmentalism' began to shift further during the 1970s, in particular when the role of the state in the economy and the market was sharply challenged by some theorists (neo-liberalists) who "began to argue that the widespread involvement of the state in economic activities, was leading to inefficiency and slower rates of economic growth than would be achieved if the market were left to its own services" (Willis 2005: 47). These theorists, according to Willis, were authors such as Deepak Lal (1983) and Bela Balassa (1971, 1981), who drew on the classical theories of Adam Smith and others regarding the 'invisible' hand of the market.

According to neo-liberal theorists, reducing state intervention in the market would create greater economic growth. Thus, the late 1970s saw a major change, "prompted both by the rise of anti-Keynesian conservatism in Europe and the US and by the seeming inability of the developmentalist approach to offer viable solutions for mounting Third World problems" (Brohman 1996: 27). In view of this, most global political economists have moved away from the mainstream 'developmentalist' paradigm in favour of neo-liberalism.

Cohen and Centeno (2006: 32) point out that "Between World War II and the economic crises of the 1970s, policy makers tended to rely heavily on the exercise of state power in their pursuit of development and prosperity." They also indicate that:

When a series of political and economic crises began to afflict the global economy, government interventionism was subject to a strong intellectual and political backlash, and a new ideological movement seeking to resurrect an updated ethos of nineteenth-century economic liberalism rose to take its place. This new political-economic liberalism-neoliberalism mandated the removal

of governments' hold over the economy and the reintroduction of open competition into economic life. (Ibid: 32-3)

In the early 1980s, multilateral institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, led by the United States, pushed developing nations towards “a package of ‘neoliberal’ reforms that included a reduction of total government spending, restricted social spending, privatization of state enterprises, lowering tariff and trade barriers, and decontrolling capital markets” (Ibid: 62).

Simon (2008) argues that the core of neo-liberalism as an economic theory is that it aims to deregulate markets in order to promote ‘free’ trade. He stresses:

It harks back to the ideas of Adam Smith and David Ricardo, in other words, to the very historical roots of neoclassical economics – hence neo(new)liberalism. This ideology rapidly became the economic orthodoxy in the North and was exported to the global South via aid policies and the measures formulated to address the debt crisis. (Simon 2008: 87)

In order to understand the conceptual framework of neo-liberalism, one must look at Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). One of the most important aspects of neo-liberal development theory in practice has been the implementation of SAPs since the late 1970s. SAPs have often been implemented by national governments in return for continuing financial support from the IMF and the World Bank. Thus, “the underpinning philosophy of SAPs reflects the market ideologies adopted by the Thatcher and Reagan administrations and implementation demonstrates the ways in which policies development in the North could be imposed on Southern nations” (Willis 2005: 51-2).

What is important to note here is that through SAPs there was a shift; that is a series of government-led policies, which are aimed at reducing the role of the state in the running of the national economy. As Willis puts it (2005: 52), “This does not mean that the state is no longer involved, but rather that the market is given much greater power.” These new policies “were designed to cut government expenditure, reduce the extent of state intervention in the economy, and promote liberalization and international trade” (Simon 2008: 87). Thus SAPs “were explicit about the necessity

of export promotion based on the Ricardian notion of comparative advantage” (Ibid: 87).

Hence, by the 1980s, the neo-liberal model, involving the restructuring of the global economy and politics, was on the rise throughout the world. This development has undoubtedly impacted on the role of the Turkish state in civilian everyday politics. Turkey’s strong-state tradition began to change as the mentality of development and modernity changed. Keyman and Koyuncu (2005: 109) informs us of significant factors connected with the post-1980s Turkish structural transformation, in terms of political economic issues, stating that “since the 1980s, the process of Turkish modernization involved new actors, new mentalities of development and new identity claims.” In order to reconstruct its economy, the Turkish state slowly began to depart from its statist position with regard to economic development. Thus Turkey in the 1980s experienced economic transformation into a neo-liberal development model, which led it towards robust, positive socio-economic development.

This robust, positive socio-economy began to develop when the democratic election which was held in 1983 brought Turgut Özal, the leader of the newly formed Motherland Party (Anavatan Partisi, ANAP) to power. Sumru and Filiztekin outlines how, under Özal’s presidency, reforms continued to be introduced. For instance, “capital markets such as the reopening of the Istanbul Stock Exchange, the beginning of Treasury auctions for marketing new government debt, the formation of an inter-bank money market, and other changes” (Sumru and Filiztekin 2006: 20).

In short, Özal managed to transform the Turkish economy through a neo-liberal development model, which not only made him the most influential political leader in Turkey since the era of Atatürk, as Öniş (2004) pointed out, but also embodied a robust positive aspect of the Turkish economy. However, it is not the aim of this study to introduce Özal or define his role in the Turkish economy, but to discuss the Turkish economy in the era of his presidency. Öniş (2004) reveals that the continuity of leadership throughout the 1980s enabled Turkey to recover swiftly from the deep economic crisis that the country had found itself in during the late 1970s. Özal’s leadership played an important role in providing credibility for the adjustment programme maintained by key international institutions such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. His eclectic background in economic bureaucracy, private business and international organizations helped to inspire confidence and led to

increased support for the programme. He was instrumental in accelerating the momentum of the liberalization process in the Turkish economy, particularly with regard to trade and capital account. Moreover, his style of leadership led to a degree of optimism regarding the future of the Turkish economy in the mid-1980s. Furthermore, Aral (2001) points out that under his leadership, “Turkey applied for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in April 1987 as the ultimate step in Turkey's search for ‘recognition’ as part of the ‘European family’.”

In conclusion, since the creation of the country, Turkey, particularly the west, has been modernized, and developed socio-economically, but the south-east has not been treated in the same way as other parts of Turkey, and the region has remained one of the poorest areas. Regarding the south-east's socio-economic development, it is worth referring to Lorenz and Erickson (1999), who argue that the Turkish government's economic policies had aimed to revitalize agriculture through mechanization. These policies improved the Turkish economy overall and aligned it with the 20th century, but the economic and agricultural schemes were focused specifically on western Turkey. Thus, “while Thrace, the Aegean areas, and the Anatolian heartland of Turkey gained much, the south-eastern Anatolia region fell farther behind, as did the expectations and hopes of the populace” (Lorenz and Erickson 1999: 5).

To recap, the state, to some extent, has always been the political actor in Turkish politics and decision-making, in particular when it comes to issues related to security and geo-strategy, geo-politics and critical geo-economic development. In particular, since the south-east was and still is the most politically problematic region for the Turkish state, the state has always been careful not to let it be fully run by civilians. The Turkish state, since the creation of the republic, has always maintained an undocumented policy toward the south-east, and this has led the region further into socio-economic deadlock.

In order to grasp the unequal socio-economic development between the south-east and the rest of Turkey (which will be described in greater detail later in this chapter), it is important to outline the political and security paradigm in the south-east in relation to the Turkish-Kurdish situation, and to see how the historical Turkish policy regarding the south-east and political turmoil in the region have played a key role in terms of the region's underdevelopment. This is the focus of the following section.

3. 3. Politics and Turkish policies: paradigms within the south-east region

It has been claimed that the socio-economic and politically volatile issues in the south-east have been the result of the tense relationship between the Turkish state and the Kurds in the region (Kılıç 1998; Özcan 2006; Kendal 1993). Turkey faced 17 minor and three major Kurdish uprisings between 1920 and 1938, and since 1984 the country has faced its latest conflict in the region, with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which has resulted in over 35,000 lives being lost between the two sides (Heper 2005). From the creation of the Turkish republic, the state and intellectual-bureaucratic elites have seen the Kurds as a threat to their republican state formation. Originally, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk promised autonomy for the Kurds during the period shortly after the First World War, saying: "We propose the foundation of municipalities where the rulers will be elected by the people living in that region. Thus, Kurds will choose their own rulers which will give them autonomy" (Kılıç 1998: 26). However, the people of the south-east region learnt later that Atatürk had something else in mind that they had not been aware of; Atatürk never wanted to re-establish a country for all but to build "a modern state along European lines with an identity that was explicitly Turkish" (McDowal 1992: 14). It is significant to note that Atatürk was careful not to upset the Kurds, "and led them to believe that as soon as he was firmly established he would recognize their claims to autonomy" (Edmonds 1971: 91). For example, at the Lausanne Conference, İsmet İnönü, the Turkish government representative, stated that the "government of the Grand National Assembly is also the government of the Kurds as much as of the Turks" (Özcan 2006: 67). In the aftermath of the Lausanne Conference, the Turkish constitution of 1924 revealed its real face, when they succeeded in building their new country. The newly built policy-makers of the Turkish state "insisted that 'anyone who is a citizen of the Turkish Republic' was a Turk" (Özcan 2006: 68).

Moreover, after the signing of the Lausanne Treaty (1923), Atatürk and his followers "began a turkification process that included, among other things, the banning of all Kurdish schools, associations, publications, and other forms of cultural expression" (Meho 1997: 9). For instance, although İnönü stated that the government of the Grand National Assembly is for both Turks and Kurds, in the aftermath of the Treaty, he said: "In the face of a Turkish majority other elements have no kind of

influence. We must turkify the inhabitants of our land at any price, and we will annihilate those who oppose the Turks or ‘le turquisme’” (Özcan 2006: 68).

When the Lausanne Treaty was signed in 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk made sure that the Kurds were left out of the agreement. At the end of the First World War, the Lausanne summit divided the land of the Kurds, Kurdistan, into five pieces shared between five countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia, despite the fact that under the Treaty of Sevres (articles 62 and 64) in 1920 the Kurds had been promised independence by the world community (Edmonds 1971). However, although Turkey successfully managed to avoid the Kurdish issue in the Lausanne summit in 1923, Turkey has never forgotten the experience of the Sevres Treaty and “The diplomatic lesson drawn by many is that the creation of a Kurdish state will inevitably weaken the Turkish state” (Robins 2003: 659).

Therefore, since the post-war period, the Kurds were forced into assimilation with mainstream Turkey, and Kurdish existence was refused, with drastic consequences for the Kurds themselves (Yeğen 1999). The Atatürk Turkish state began to “deny that the Kurds have a separate ethnic identity [and] they are not Kurds but ‘mountain Turks’” (1975: 8). Nihat Erim, the Turkish prime minister at the time, said: “We accept no other nations as living in Turkey, only the Turks” (Short and McDermott 1975: 8). Accordingly, in 1930, the minister of justice, Mahmut Esat Bozkurt, also told the press:

We live in a country called Turkey, the freest in the world. As your deputy, I feel I can express my real convictions without reserve: I believe that the Turk must be the only lord, the only master of this country. Those who are not of pure Turkish stock can have only one right in this country, the right to be servants or slaves. (Abdulla 2012: 17)

As Yeğen (1999:555) puts it, in particular, “from the mid-1920s until the end of the 1980s, the Turkish state ‘assumed’ that there was no Kurdish element on Turkish territory” at all. Whenever the Kurdish question was raised, the Turkish state and politicians would simply claim that there was no such issue; it was interpreted as politically reactionary, tribal resistance or regional backwardness, but never as an ethno-political question (Yeğen 1999: 555). There was no doubt that the Turkish state’s policies towards the Kurds and their region were successful, and this made the

formation of the Turkish state secure for decades.

However, when the idea behind the formation of the new state became reality and the policy of assimilation became explicit, and when Turkey enforced its politics and policy on the Kurds and their region, the Kurds were swift to react. Although several Kurdish revolts took place against the Turkish state, it is important to give specific attention to three major uprisings which took place before the 1980s. In 1925 a Kurdish religious leader, Sheikh Said, led the first major reaction against Atatürk's policy, but this revolt was brutally crushed by the Turkish state. Sheikh Said's revolt was mainly based on tribal and religious allegiance, through which he succeeded in occupying one-third of Kurdish Anatolia; his uprising was not fully supported by many Kurdish nationalists, for instance, those based at Diyarbakir (Robins 1993: 660). Owing to both the fragile unification among the Kurds and the ruthlessness of the Turkish state, the revolt was suppressed and Sheikh Said and his friends were captured and hanged, while the rest of his tribes were deported to the west of Turkey.

In the 1930s there was another serious uprising, the 'Ararat Uprising'. This second important uprising, unlike that of Sheikh Said, was a war of liberation, which was organized by a committee called Khoybun. "In October a village near Mount Ararat was designated the provisional capital of Kurdistan, appeals were addressed to the Great Powers and the League of Nations, and messages were sent to compatriots in Iraq and Syria asking for co-operation in liberating the homeland" (Edmonds 1971: 91). Although the uprising had been supported by many tribal leaders, their hopes of an independent Kurdistan lasted only one year, and Ihsan Nuri, the leader of the uprising, an ex-Turkish army officer, was defeated by over 45,000 Turkish troops and had to seek refuge in Persia.

Thirdly, in 1937, the third major Kurdish uprising took place, led by another religious and tribal leader, Sayyid Riza, in Dersim (Tunceli). Because this uprising was - like the first one - mainly religious and tribal, it was soon crushed by the Turkish army, who hanged Sayyid Riza and his friends and deported many of his followers. This time, the Turkish state significantly blocked the development of Kurdish nationalism (Rugman & Hutchings 1993:26). "The Minister of Interior, Jelal Bey, has announced in the Turkish Chamber of Deputies that the Kurdish problem no longer exists" (Elphinston 1946: 97).

In order to control the Kurdish region and secure Turkish authority, Turkish policy-makers created policies to seal the remaining problem and the existence of the

Kurds in Turkey. Most Turkish policies towards the Kurds had already been created; for instance, Turkey, at the end of its first decade as a republic (1934) created a law to defuse the Kurdish issue by means of a settlement. According to Yeğen (1999: 562), “this law enabled the government to ‘adjust’ the demographic composition of the country according to its own concerns. The concern of the government was manifest - dispersing and assimilating Kurds among Turks.” The Turkish assimilative policy began by creating regional boarding schools for Kurdish children and changing the names of their villages, cities and areas into Turkish ones, under by-law no. 1587 (Kiliç 1998). After these three uprisings took place, the Kurdish region became the main focus of Turkish policy-makers’ attempts to maintain control and pursue the state’s assimilation policies. For instance, in the 1960s, Cemal Gursel, the head of the Committee of National Unity (Milli Birlik Komitesi, CNU) and the fourth President of the Republic, confidently stated: ‘There are no Kurds in this country’ (Kiliç 1998). While the state claimed that there were no Kurds in Turkey, the Turkish state and its politicians continued to threaten the Kurds, whose voice had become louder. For instance, the leader of the 1960s military junta declared:

If the Kurds run after an illusion of creating a state, their destiny will be wiped off the face of the earth. The Turkish race has shown the way in which it can treat those who covet the homeland which it has obtained at the price of its own blood and untold labours. It has eliminated the Armenians from this land in 1915 and the Greeks in 1922. (Bozarslan 1992: 80)

After the crushing of Kurdish uprisings between 1925 and 1938, there was no serious resistance by the Kurds until the 1970s. During this period, the south-east became deeply isolated socially and economically from the rest of Turkey. Turkey did not focus on the socio-economic problems of the south-east region, and simply ignored it. So, while the west of Turkey developed, the Kurdish region remained underdeveloped (Kendal 1993). Since then, the south-east has continued to be one of the poorest parts of Turkey and per capita incomes are the lowest in the country. The region’s people did not have many avenues for economic development.

3.4. South-east region: socio-economic development, Kurdish social structure and Turkish politics

The previous section pointed to two major issues that the Turkish state has faced in the south-east. One was the continual Kurdish uprisings against Turkish state policies and politics, and the other was the fact that Turkey has failed to create a concrete stable policy for the region, all of which has pushed the region further into under-development. Turkey thought that it would be able to solve the situation via GAP and its concept of modernization. However it has become clear that region's unsolved problem is not only a socio-economic one but also involves politics and the Kurdish socio-cultural paradigm.

Although the Turkish state and the Turkish general public claim that there is no difference between Kurds and Turks, this does not reflect reality. The Kurds, are culturally closer to the Middle East than to Turks. It could be this difference that has kept Kurds from being assimilated into mainstream Turkish society for decades. The Kurds are the only ethnic group that have not been assimilated in Turkey. When Atatürk's regime wanted to provide Turkey with a European-type parliamentary system of government and establish the country as a member of Western civilization, the Kurds began their fight to create a traditional eastern/Islamic regime under the leadership of Sheikh Said in 1925, for instance. Although Sheikh Said fought for Kurds and Kurdistan, his main aim was to establish a country based on Islamic culture not western civilization, like the Turkish state. As McDowall (1996: 194) reveals, "Shaykh Said issued a manifesto in favour of a Kurdish government and the restoration of the caliphate", not a western type system. In short, despite the fact that the majority of the Kurds live in the south-east of Turkey, they have few similarities with the prevailing culture of the Turkish nation. In fact they have a starkly different culture, and this was perceived as a problematic issue for the formation of the Turkish state.

Moreover, Turkish society is mainly centred round the 'hanafi' Islamic sect, or 'school of thought, whereas the Kurds' 'shafi' sect (school of thought) is considered to be more Middle Eastern in character. Their religious views have not been a source of substantial problems, but when we assess the overall culture, the lifestyle, of Turks and Kurds, there have always been issues which have obstructed integration, and which Turkey considered to be a security concern for the unity of their republican state. Furthermore, the Kurds, unlike the Turks, have a "language [which] is clearly Indo-European rather than Semitic and is related to Farsi (Persian)" (Anderson 2000:

124). “It has been said that, since the Kurds have been settled in their present home since about 2400 BC, they have claims to racial purity and to continuity of culture that are stronger than those of any European nation” (Ibid: 124). All of which have constituted complications for Turkish state policy-making in terms of what to do with the south-east.

Based on my primary and secondary readings, it is clear that the south-east has been isolated from the rest of Turkey from the very beginning of the republic, and that the region was left under the control of tribal leaders with the complicity of the state. For instance, it is the tribal leaders, who run sectors such as agriculture in the region, not the ordinary people or the state. These tribal leaders have not been seen as a major danger to the Turkish regime. Most of them were traditionally loyal to the Turkish state mainly for their own interest and so as to protect their dominant position in the south-east. Nevertheless, Kurdish society is largely tribal, and the Kurds are strongly loyal to their tribe as well as to their territory. In Kurdish society, there is also strong religious loyalty, and religious men such as the “sheikhs, the local leaders of religious brotherhoods” have had a key role to play in the society (McDowall 1985: 8). Almost every village or tribe had their leader who had absolute authority over their domain. Although after the First World War Atatürk crushed and outlawed all the religious orders, the Kurds’ loyalty to their sheikhs continued underground (Ibid: 8). As McDowall states, even now (in modern Turkey) “some Kurds who intellectually consider themselves ‘progressive’ can feel emotional loyalties to sheikh” or agha (chief) (Ibid: 8).

Until recently everywhere in the south-east region and still in many areas of the Kurdish region, political power lies in the hands of aghas (chiefs) who control small or large groups or villages. Nobody could challenge the authority of the aghas. Their obligations were to make sure the agriculture, water resources and livestock were secured and maintained smoothly. Furthermore, “the agha alone handled diplomacy both with other villages and with the government” (Ibid: 9). Although sheikhs and the tribal leaders (aghas) were suppressed and most of them were sent to exile to other parts of the country by Atatürk’s government (because sheikhs and some aghas had risen up against the regime), they came back to their villages when Turkey went through its first transition from single party rule to a multi-party system in the 1950s.

In 1950, with the victory of the Democratic Party, aghas, sheikhs and many other landlords “acquired new importance since they could deliver votes to government” (McDowall 1985:13). Through the intercession of these sheikhs and aghas, it was much easier for Turkish politicians to obtain a huge number of votes and get elected. With the transition from a single party to a multi-party system, it became possible for the sheikhs and aghas to themselves be elected to the Turkish parliament. But everyone had to, and still has to, adhere to the official ideology and accept Atatürk’s direction: “Happy is the man who calls himself a Turk” (Rugman & Hutchings, 1993: 26).

Some Kurdish sheikhs and aghas even became ministers, which they were obliged to do under Turkish identity, and by following Kemalist ideology by avoiding any “reference to Kurds and Kurdistan” (McDowall 1985: 13). As Kendal states “while the Kurdish sheikhs and aghas used to fight for their national liberation, they gradually became an intermediary for Turkish colonialism” (1993: 79). Thus, since the Kurds were silent and everything was functioning well for the interests of the Turkish state under these sheikhs and aghas, and since there were no problems in the region from the Kurds living under this feudalistic and tribal society, there was no need for the state to worry about the development of the region.

So, while the west of Turkey developed, the south-east was pushed into further socio-economic hardship. In south-east Turkey there was almost no industrialization and, except in the oil industry, there were few industrial jobs. Road and rail were mainly created for the military purpose of enabling access to and control of the Kurdish villages (Short, 1975: 5). It has been argued that political factors have been among the reasons that the south-east was kept economically under-developed. According to Turkish state statistics from the 1970s, in the Kurdish provinces “the illiteracy rate runs at some 77% - 64% of men and 91% of women cannot read” (Short and McDermott, 1975: 8). One of Atatürk’s friends and his right-hand man, Fevzi Çakmak, said: “Setting up school in the eastern provinces would awaken the people of those provinces and open up pathways for separatist currents such as Kurdish nationalism” (Kendal 1993: 74).

By the 1970s, the above-mentioned double standard was unacceptable to many Kurdish intellectuals and students, who mainly lived or studied in big Turkish cities and protested against such an ill-conceived idea. By the 1970s, the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKD), the first legal Kurdish organization formed by

Kurdish intellectuals, focused on developing the Kurdish region economically and culturally. During the 1970s, Kurdish intellectuals, teachers and students became well aware that Turkish policy concerning their region was motivated by purely political factors, and these educated Kurds organized themselves politically in order to put an end to the double standard of Turkish state policy. There was hope that Turkish leftist leaders such as Bülent Ecevit would at least recognize Kurdish existence and culture. As Entessar points out, when Ecevit went to the Kurdish region in 1974, he “promised the Kurds that if his party [...] won the election, he would address the underdevelopment of the Kurdish area” (1992: 91). However, when the Kurds asked if he would raise the issue of Kurdish autonomy, Ecevit’s reaction was tough and he strongly refused such a demand in the same way as all the other Turkish leaders (Ibid: 92). In 1971, under martial law “DDKD were outlawed, their leaders and activities were imprisoned, and the military initiated a new round of sustained attacks on Kurdish villages” (Ibid: 90-1).

1974 saw the formation of a new Kurdish students’ movement, amongst whom was a young student, Abdullah Öcalan, who wanted to create a Kurdish National Liberation Movement. Four years later, in 1978, Öcalan, with a small group of his friends, decided to create their party, which was called *Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan* – Kurdish Workers’ Party (PKK) (Rugman & Hutchings, 1993: 27). The PKK was unlike pre-multi-party Kurdish movements. First of all, it was not a feudalistic based movement but was based on individual Kurdish students whose “original activities [not only] focused primarily on gaining official recognition for Kurdish language and cultural rights” but also incorporated a new ideology that could challenge Turkish policy in the region (Entessar 1992: 94).

However, the 1980s’ military junta in Turkey had a forceful impact on the Kurdish people and the Kurdish guerrillas (PKK), who suffered severely as a result. The intention of the regime arising from the 1980 coup was to “demobilize [Turkish] society [...] especially by outlawing all co-operation between political parties and other civil society institutions such as trade unions and professional organizations” (Özbudun 2000: 27), and since the Kurds represented a serious threat to the formation of the Turkish republic, the Kurds were the ones to suffer most.

The junta initiated a vigorous campaign to crush all manifestations of Kurdish existence. Their culture, identity and mother tongue were forbidden. The regime which “seized power in 1980 instituted some of the most regressive and repressive

policies towards the Kurds, including a broadening of the language restrictions” (Barkey and Fuller 1997: 66). Kurdish development was not what Turkey wanted to see either within its border or next to its border. The rise of Kurdish nationalism meant a substantial threat to their national unification. The regime, in order to demolish the Kurdish nationalism which had arisen in the south-east in the 1980s, declared a state of emergency in the region, increased detention periods pending trial, established the State Security Courts, continued legal restrictions on the Kurdish language and banned Kurdish-language publications.

The post 1980s Turkish military regime not only depressed the economy of the south-east region even further, it also obstructed Turkey from joining the European Union (EU), mainly because of its serious human rights abuses, because EU criteria are based on cosmopolitan democracy, allowing the citizens of the world to enjoy fundamental human rights (Held 1995: 96). Turkey’s stubborn resistance over the Kurdish issue has made it difficult for Turkey to accede to the EU, which has been damaging for the Turkish economy as well as to the democratization of Turkey in the framework of the new world order.

However, very shortly after the 1980s’ military junta and during the immediate post-Cold War period, the Turkish economy became increasingly involved in international trade, focusing on global rather than domestic markets, investing in long term market relations strategies, and gearing towards technological developments and strategic planning for production and investment. As a result, the economy experienced the increasing “importance of the discourse of ‘free market’, the multiplication and the dissemination of economic actors, and the pluralization of economic organizations in Turkish society” (Keyman and Koyuncu 2005: 110-11).

So while the Turkish economy was expanding and it was taking its place in the global economy, the south-east’s socio-economy was becoming somewhat problematic, to the economy itself and to Turkey’s position in the world. In particular, it was becoming an obstacle preventing Turkey’s accession to the EU, and this forced Turkish policy-makers to adopt the notion of a development/modernization model. In order to take its place in the new world order, the globalized world system which emerged during the post-cold war period, Turkey wanted to reshuffle its politics. For instance, Turkey’s chief EU negotiator, Minister Ali Babacan, pointed out that Turkey would be degraded to the status of "a Third World country" unless it pursued EU democracy and the norm of law (*Today’s Zaman* (newspaper) 17 December 2007).

The political instability in the south-east and the socio-economic issues in the region were starting to obstruct Turkey's growth.

According to mid-1980s' data, a comparison of the gross regional product (GRP) of the south-east region with the GDP of Turkey showed the level of its underdevelopment, as the south-east accounted for only 4% of GNP. "Per capita income was only 47% of the national average" (Ünver 1997: 453). Likewise, "the literacy rate in 1985 was 55% compared with 77% nationally, with women's low literacy rates accounting for most of this disparity, 39%, compared to 71% for men" (Harris 2002: 749). Ownership of land was also unevenly distributed in the region; for instance, reference is made to the "problems of uneven land distribution, with roughly 10% of the population owning 75% of the land, and high degrees of landlessness" (Ibid: 749).

Since the creation of modern Turkey, the south-east has been socially, economically, geo-politically and ethnographically a problematic issue for the Turkish state. To diminish the problems in the south-east and turn the region into a profitable area for the country's overall interest, in particular to establish hydro-electric production in the region, GAP, as a social development project, was thought to be the answer.

We can see from the above that in order to secure its place in a globalized world system, Turkey adopted a development/modernization model aimed at diminishing the socio-economic problems (if not the political ones) of the south-east via GAP. The following section discusses the development/modernization model and proposes that the GAP 'social development' project needs to be analyzed in the context of the notion of development/modernization.

3.5. An analytical approach to GAP through the lens of modernization/development theory

As we have already emphasized, from the post-1980s the Turkish economy followed a neo-liberal development model, which led it towards robust positive economic development. However, the south-east region's chronic socio-economic issues were creating migration to the big cities, unemployment, uneven economic growth, and unplanned for issues with urbanization and crime. So, Turkish economic policy makers and the state needed to focus on the issue of the south-east region's chronic

underdevelopment. Based on this, the obligation was given to GAP to overcome the situation within the context of development.

So, to understand the concept of GAP in relation to development, including global development, we need to reiterate the principle behind modernization/development theory. For modernization theory, “nations remain underdeveloped when traditional achievement and kin relations dominate” (Andersen and Taylor 2006: 252). Thus, it is claimed, this process “enables backward countries to escape from tradition, to promote and accelerate transition and finally to overcome underdevelopment” (Kreutzmann 1999: 256).

Parsons argued that “societies change in distinct patterns, moving from traditional to modern forms” (Roberts and Hite 2000: 83).

As in biological evolution, each social adaptation either supports or inhibits further evolution. Modern societies were seen to include bureaucratic organizations, money and markets, a universalistic legal system, and the democratic association in both public and private forms. (Roberts and Hite 2000: 83)

Parsons (1964: 83) points out that normally in the evolution of living systems, new developments have vastly increased the adaptive capacity of the system, so much so, that without them, “further major developmental steps would be blocked, though survival in a ‘niche’ is possible and frequent.” He states “Four features of human societies of the level of culture and social organization were cited as having universal and major significance as prerequisites for social-cultural development: technology, kinship, organization based on an incest taboo, communication based on languages, and religion.” He concludes that, “In the broadest frame of reference ... we may think of them as together constituting the main outline of the structural foundations of modern society” (Ibid: 99).

This approach was built around the conviction that there was a connection between norms, structures, and the behaviours of actors. The norms were created around individual interests and values; the structures were developed around roles, role networks and social class formation; while behaviour was built around motivation and perception of processes and reality. Parsons and his

group of structuralist-functionalists believed that these three elements developed together and constituted a system whereby change in one element would entail change in the others. They believed that the process by which modern values would be diffused was through education and the transfer of technology from the modern West to the elites in new areas where capitalism was being opened up. (Nabudere 1997: 205)

In short, according to modernization theory, the development of a country, for instance, goes through a process of changes: changes in its traditional attitudes, values and institutions.

For Rostow, who aimed to provide an alternative to Karl Marx's theory of modern history, "[t]he key element [...] was the process of capital formation, represented by five stages through which all countries pass in the process of economic growth" (Binns 2008: 84). Rostow's theory on modernization and development was that all nations passed through the same five stages of economic development: traditional society, preconditions for take-off, take-off, the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption.

Traditional society, family and clan relations played a substantial role in social and political structure and organization. For Rostow (1960: 101) it involved "a long-run fatalism; that is, the assumption that the range of possibilities open to one's grandchildren would be just about what it had been for one's grandparents." More specifically, we can argue that his view on modernization was based on pre-Newtonian science and technology, and the post-Newtonian world. Rostow (1960: 100) used the period of Newton as a symbol, a "watershed in history when men came widely to believe that the external world was subject to a few knowable laws, and was systematically capable of productive manipulation." Thus, in his view, post-Newtonian society was an era of change in every aspect of our political, economic and social structure.

The preconditions for take-off were initially developed, in a clearly marked way, in Western Europe of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries as the insights of modern science began to be translated into new production functions in both agriculture and industry, in a setting of dynamism by the

lateral expansion of world markets and the international competition for them.
(Ibid: 102)

The take-off commenced when the economic process was possible and changes in economic activity spread globally; institutions for mobilizing transport and communications widened the scope of trade internally as well as externally. Rostow argued that activity could not exceed the pace set by a specific economy, so low productivity represented the key methods of a society still characterised “by the old social structure and values, and by the regionally based political institutions that developed in conjunction with them” (Ibid: 102).

The take-off began with the rise of technology. Rostow argues that “in the more general case, the take-off awaited not only the build-up of social overhead capital and a surge of technological development in industry and agriculture,” but also depended on the surfacing of a political group who would regard the modernization of the economy as their central political aim (Ibid: 103).

Rostow defines maturity as the stage in which economies indicate an ability to move beyond the original industries which initiated their take-off, and to absorb and apply a wide range of the resources of modern technology (Ibid: 104). This is the stage when economies prove that they have the technological and entrepreneurial skills to produce more or less anything they choose to produce.

So, Turkish policy-makers believed that the south-east region required modernization by employing stages through which the region would pass in the process of socio-economic development with the assistance of GAP social programmes. These stages were: the diminution of traditional society, the provision of social stability and the enhancement of the employment capacity of the regional sector, the improvement of the entrepreneurial and managerial capacities of local businesses, influencing national and international entrepreneurs to launch new investments in the south-east⁶⁴ and the creation of socio-economic integration between the underdeveloped south-east/Kurds and the industrialized west/Turks.

In short, as Mehmet Açıkgöz, the GAP regional director, stated when I interviewed him in July 2011, GAP’s main objectives were to make the region rich,

⁶⁴ See more in ‘GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı’, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 22 April 2010).

enhance individuals' well-being, increase individual incomes and create social stability that would promote economic development and end poverty in the region, from which the whole nation would benefit. When I questioned whether Turkey had been influenced by the notion of world development, his answer was straightforward: "Of course, developments in the world brought a new concept of development; and the insight of the GAP Master Plan, in 1986 and 1989, has been created in line with that development in the globe."

So the materialization of GAP's 'social development' project was formulated in the context of global modernization/development, which required moving from traditional to modern forms of society. Based on this principle, Turkey planned to deal with the backwardness of the south-east and move it away from its traditional ways of life in order to transform it into a modern society. The President of GAP, Sadrettin Karahocagil (personal interview, July 2011), stressed that the south-east region was mainly inhabited by Kurds and people from other ethnic backgrounds, who lived in a feudalistic society. Although in the past Turkey had tried to change the structure of the feudalist social formation in the region, he stated that there was still a lot to be done. He claimed that they would transform all this via the GAP development project.

The interview with Karahocagil enlightened me about the way in which Turkey, since its creation, had been unable to succeed in achieving integration between the east (Kurds) and the west (Turks) despite all its policies, but the GAP project was the element through which it hoped to achieve this aim through the implementation of the social development policy. Karahocagil's view on the project was clear: he believed that once it was completed, it would drive Kurdish people out of their remote villages into the big cities. GAP would evacuate poor local people (Kurds) from remote areas and put an end to nomadic societies in the south-east, and it would drive them into mainstream Turkish culture, through which they would not only be integrated into the Turkish Kemalist political system but also be controlled socially and economically.

The state aimed, via the GAP project, to influence professional foreign companies to invest and run businesses in the region. Turkish policy-makers hope that, through the intervention of professional companies and GAP's social project, Turkey will vanquish the feudalistic society of the region and destroy the collectivism of the Kurds (which the state regards as a problem), promoting individualism instead,

as Turkey believes an individualistic society would be relatively easy to control and manage. Nevertheless, in order to understand the modernization/development theory, it is important to subject the theory to a broad critical analysis, which will enlighten us as to the core notion behind the development plans.

3.6. Critical approach to the modernization/development theory

Criticism of the concept of modernization/development is substantial. The problem with modernization theories became clear in the aftermath of the 1960s, when economic development and social change did not succeed in Third World countries in the manner which had been predicted by the modernization theorists such as Talcott Parsons (1964) and Walt W. Rostow (1960).⁶⁵ Modernization as a theory of development (Talcott Parsons 1964) can be traced from Max Weber's theory of modernization and traditionalism, that is, "Weberian dichotomization of modernity and tradition was [argued to be] wrong because it obscured the processes of interplay between the two social-historical processes" (Nabudere 1997: 203).

Furthermore, after the 1960s, modernization theory was subjected to intense political and intellectual criticism by many theorists, such as Andre Gunder Frank, from the dependency school. For instance, Frank, who was effective in exposing the politics of Rostow's theory, addressed the fact that "Rostow subverted people's dreams of a better future and converted them to the worship of the almighty dollar" (Peet and Hartwick 2009: 133).

The criticism of modernization theory increased. Research by one of the most influential post-development critique theorists, Sachs (1997: 290), revealed that "[t]he gap between frontrunners and stragglers has not been bridged; on the contrary, it has widened to the extent that it has become unimaginable that it could ever be closed." With regard to modernization theory's claim to be the only force capable of bringing development to the Third World, it became clear during the 1990s that the contribution of Third World countries, "where two-thirds of humanity live, [toward] the world's GNP has shrunk to 15 per cent, while the share of the industrial countries, with 20 per cent of the world's population, has risen to 80 per cent" (Ibid: 290).

⁶⁵ The Third World countries are generally poor, underdeveloped, not industrialized and mainly agricultural (Andersen and Taylor 2006: 254). These countries are mostly in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Moreover, it is argued that whether a country develops or remains poor may well be the result of other countries exploiting the less powerful. It has been suggested that “Modernization theory does not sufficiently take into account the interplay and relationships between countries that can affect a country’s economic or social conditions” (Andersen and Taylor 2006: 252). As Nabudere (1997: 203) states:

Many “development” economists and political scientists admit that despite tremendous achievements which have been made in this direction in a number of countries, the vast majority of the world population especially in Africa and South Asia, live in abject poverty and that the “gap” between the very rich and the very poor within countries and different regions of the world is widening.

In the past (during the British Empire for instance) the imperialist countries exercised their hegemony through their physical intervention and exploitation of their colonies. In the modern world, the hegemonic states impose their policies and ideology through aid and ‘social development’ models.

It needs to be borne in mind that poverty in Third World countries posed the greatest threat to US/western interests. Thus the massive development programmes for these poor countries had to be undertaken not only for socio-economic security but also for political reasons, for example, preventing the spread of Soviet Union style communism. For instance, during the Cold War period the United States provided substantial financial support to Taiwan and South Korea as part of the geopolitical struggle, and targeted poor Third World countries to be rescued from underdevelopment in order to defend against Soviet intervention. However, although the post-Cold War period has not much changed the notion of development, the typology of development has been continued using different methods. For example, development aid has been used more recently in Afghanistan and Iraq by the United States and other western powers in an attempt to prevent these countries from falling into the hands of radical Islamism.

It is important to note that although the conceptual framework of modernization theory involved developmental knowledge being transmitted from the global North to

the South,⁶⁶ and development being seen as an effective way of vanquishing poverty, the general literature indicates that modernization/developmental theories were based on earlier European capitalist developmentalists as a strategy for controlling all the nations in the world. Since it was based on a false concept, demolishing poverty in the world was an illusion. It was an illusion because its concept when applied to Third World countries was to exploit their economies rather than develop them. In this regard, the literature claims that modernization/developmental theories, which were intended to be used as a strategy for world development failed because of the level of self-interest demonstrated by the dominant states.

Nevertheless, “post-development theorists have argued that ‘development’ should be focused on what local communities want and should not be a response to a Northern-imposed model of what is a correct form of development” (Willis 2005: 207). In addition, post-developmental critique “has been very important in highlighting the ways in which ‘development’ as a concept is always a product of a particular set of power relations at any one time” (Ibid: 207).

Thus, the question arises as to whether the concept of the GAP ‘social development’ project was really formulated within modernization theory by Turkish policy-makers in order to create integration between the south-east and the rest of Turkey and bring prosperity to the region, or whether it was just aimed at strengthening state authority in the region and quenching the rise of Kurdish nationalism.

Notwithstanding, it is evident that Turkey focused on the socio-economic development of the south-east in order to narrow the socio-economic gap between that region and the rest of the country. However, in terms of the Kurdish question, Turkish politics has always been uncertain. Despite the fact that few politicians were prepared to recognize the paradigm of the region’s political issue, some, for example Süleyman Demirel, Mesut Yılmaz (the former leader of the Motherland Party (ANAP)) and Recep T. Erdogan, indicated that they recognized the Kurdish question and suggested that cultural rights could be granted to the Kurds.⁶⁷ The Turkish state

⁶⁶ The North is considered to comprise the dominant and powerful industrialized nations, essentially western countries which are the dominating and controlling economic entity. These are generally considered to be the United States, Japan and the European Union (EU), which possess most of the world’s capital and technology (Kendall 2009: 300). The South is considered to comprise the three continents of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Sau 1975).

⁶⁷ Regarding the Kurdish question from the perspective of Turkish politicians, see (Yılmaz'dan Kürt

overall has maintained its traditional approach, that is, the issue of the south-east is to be treated as an economic problem rather than a political issue. For instance, both the nationalist right-wing and the statist left in Turkey claimed that the essence of the Kurdish question was economical rather than political and historical. Former Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit, claimed that “if the region’s underdevelopment and feudal structure could be resolved, the Kurdish insurrection would simply disappear” (Kalpakian 2004: 120). Moreover, according to a report by Ecevit’s Democratic Left Party, *Demokratik Sol Partisi* (DSP) in relation to the Kurdish question, there was no ethnic problem in the south-east, but the region’s backwardness and the feudal system in the region had complicated the matter.⁶⁸ In order to overcome the region’s problems, it is critical that the issues raised above are effectively tackled.

However, despite the fact that Turkish government and the leader of Turkish mainstream political leaders have argued that the socio-economic situation of the south-east should have been resolved, the statements did not come to reality and the situation of the region has continued to be the same.

As already stated, land ownership is just one example of uneven distribution in the region, with roughly 10% of the population owning 75% of the land, and high degrees of landlessness (Harris 2002). The majority of the land in the south-east is owned by aghas, who have been supported by the Turkish mainstream in order to collect votes, and the state also used this semi-feudal system for internal security; for instance, the village guards (*köy korucular*)⁶⁹ were employed to fight against the PKK with the support of the local chieftains or aghas in the region (van Bruinessen 1992). However, as Çarkoglu stated (personal interview, June 2011):

The idea is to have investments which reignite the region, creating some kind of export bases for agricultural products, and then creating some kind of

sorununda özeleştiri) Hürriyet, hurarsiv.Hurriyet.com.tr/goster/haber.aspx?id; Kürt realitesi - Milliyet, www.milliyet.com.tr/2005/08/17/yazar/bila.html (accessed 20 June 2014).

⁶⁸See Türkiye'nin kürt sorunu hafızası - SETA arsiv.setav.org/public/indir.aspx? Bulent Ecevit'in TBMM Konusmasi, 26 Aralik 1991 | 261. 3.7.6 Güneydogu Sorunu – Ekonomik Boyutu Raporu, 1996 | 365 (accessed 20 June 2014).

⁶⁹ “The Village Guard system soon became embroiled in the tribalism of the region. With the PKK using violence as an instrument of terror against members of the militia and their families, those attracted to membership of the Village Guard have often been clans who are traditionally loyal to the state” (Robins 2003: 663); regarding köy kurucular, see also van Bruinessen, Kurdish society, ethnicity, nationalism and refugee problems. In Kreyenbroek, P. G. and Sperl, S. (eds.) (1992), *The Kurds: a contemporary overview*.

regional industrial base to help the region develop on its own; but my understanding is that this is almost an impossible dream at this point.

Çarkoglu pointed out that all the Turkish state cared about was throwing money at the region and hoping to stop people (Kurds) from asking for cultural recognition.

What has become obvious is that there is a paradox here in that, on the one hand, the Turkish state wanted to modernize the region, which I argue was mainly to get rid of poverty because it was becoming a danger to the authority of the state, while on the other hand, Turkey did not do much about getting rid of the traditional elements or the semi-feudal characteristics of society in the region.

3.7. Concluding remarks

To conclude, this chapter has stated that since the creation of the Turkish republic, the state has left traditional Turkish society behind and created secularity, rationality and a modern industrial economy; it “invested heavily in the industrialization of western Turkey during the initial five-years plan,” for instance (Nestor 1996: 34). However, the socio-development of the south-east has not been the main focus of the Turkish policy-makers. The region’s condition became worse, aggravated by a chronically high rate of unemployment and the fact that half the populace was not literate.

Eventually, the Kurdish region became problematic and a critical issue for Turkish policy-makers. On the one hand, Turkey was a winner at the Lausanne summit (after the First World War) at which the land of the Kurds (Kurdistan) was divided into between five countries: Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and Armenia, Turkey; Turkey naturally claimed the region as part of its republic. On the other hand, it neglected the region, if not deliberately pushed it into the hands of the feudal patrons, or aghas and sheikhs, some of whom assisted Turkish politicians at the time by gathering electoral votes. Although Atatürk’s Turkey was a republic and rejected the religious or feudalistic led state, it turned a blind eye to such a society in the Kurdish region in order to make control of the Kurds easier via these leaders.

However, by the mid-1980s, in the context of the political changes in the world, the region of South-eastern Anatolia, with its poverty, unemployment, socio-economic issues, increasingly unhealthy population and poor industry, was

creating a threat to Turkish authority. Along with the above issues and associated instability, the Kurdish movement in the south-east was gathering momentum. By the late 1980s, Turkish policy-makers and the ruling elite believed that, in order to diminish the problems in the south-east, the socio-economic issues would have to be tackled. They believed that socio-economic development would eventually overcome all other issues, such as the Kurdish question, and that if resolved, it would fill the gap between the region and the rest of Turkey, which would create integration. Thus, GAP, which originated to utilize Euphrates and Tigris river water for irrigation and (mainly) hydroelectric production, was considered to be the first serious ‘social development’ scheme in the south-east region since the creation of the Turkish republic.

Ultimately, I suggest that it is the combination of the Turkish development strategy and factors within the concept of the development framework which have enabled the GAP ‘social development’ project to materialize. The question remains as to how successful the GAP ‘social development’ project has been so far, how sustainable it is, and whether it can be regarded as a solution for the entire region. The following chapters will analyze the overall progress of GAP in terms of social development for the south-east region. Most importantly it will be assessing whether the idea of sustainable development was taken into account. However, in order to fully understand the GAP project, we need to look at the overall literature on it to see what it makes of the ‘social development’ aspect of the project. Therefore, the following chapter mainly focuses on an overall assessment of the literature on GAP, which provides a variety of perspectives.

CHAPTER FOUR

An overview on the literature on GAP and its ‘social development’ project

4.1. Introduction

The GAP project has been on the international agenda, bringing with it widespread criticism that the project reduces water flow for downstream countries such as Syria and Iraq, and raising issues related to the protection of historical sites and the environment which still occupy domestic and international attention. There are also criticisms regarding the lack of completion of the project, which have raised scepticism as to whether it has, by any measure, succeeded in providing prosperity to the region. However, all the literature on GAP concerns the infrastructure of the project, and mainly accepts the position that GAP was designed as an integrated regional development programme aimed at increasing regional socio-economic development in the disadvantaged south-east, a politically disputed territory (Öktem 2002; Kolars and Mitchell 1991; Klot 1994; Unver 1997; Harris 2002; Gündogan 2005).

Broadly speaking, GAP is held to be a ‘social development’ scheme that would create economic, social and spatial changes aiming to end the chronic poverty of the south-east/Kurdish region by raising locals’ income levels and living standards, providing social stability and economic growth by enhancing the employment capacity of the regional sector, and creating socio-economic integration between the underdeveloped south-east/Kurds and the industrialized west/Turks.

This chapter, outlining the literature on the GAP ‘social development’ programmes, will clarify what is meant by the project, enabling us to broaden our understanding of the nature of the project and its overall programmes through different lenses. I firstly present the overall literature on the GAP project and attempt to grasp what this literature makes of the ‘social development’ aspect of it. Secondly, I outline the literature in relation to GAP’s political implications. I examine the politicization of the project and its possible impact in terms of future insecurity and instability in the region if not throughout the Middle East, but mainly concentrate on

the fact that GAP may be being used by the Turkish state in order to address the Kurdish question via social development programmes. Finally, the chapter will go through the literature on the lack of completion of the GAP ‘social development’ project. The works of Carkoglu and Eder (2005), Ercin (2006), Altinbilek and Tortajada (2012), Varsamidis (2010) and Beleli (2005) will also be examined to clarify the condition and the results of the project. Having shown that GAP has struggled to reach its main objectives regarding regional development, this study will enlighten us as to why the ‘social development’ project has not reached its targets.

4.2. An analytical approach to the literature on the social development dimension of GAP

There have been a considerable number of works on GAP, regarding it as an alternative socio-economic formula for dealing with the backwardness of the south-east through the ‘social development’ programmes, an ambitious modernization strategy supported by the highest level of the Turkish state, Turkish ruling elite and by the mainstream political parties. Thus, despite the fact that I examine GAP, investigate its progress and most importantly seek to establish whether it has achieved its key aim through analyzing empirical and theoretical data, I also suggest looking at the most relevant literature on GAP in order to do the subject justice.

In order to understand the GAP ‘social development’ project and its target of sustainable human development, the following literature appears significant. John F. Kolars and William A. Mitchell’s *The Euphrates River and the Southeast Anatolia Development Project* (1991) was one of the first and most important textbooks introducing the aims and objectives of the GAP ‘social development’ project. They examine the project in detail in their book, and also emphasize its impact on downstream riparian states such as Syria and Iraq. Despite the fact that the focus of this study is GAP’s domestic front, the writers were concerned about the rise in the population levels and increasing aspirations for economic development in the Middle East, which would lead to demand for more water, and could present a significant problem. The agriculture of Syria and Iraq has been dependent on the flow of Euphrates and Tigris river water for thousands of years. The building of dams in the context of the GAP project puts Syria and Iraq in a “strategically and materially

disadvantageous position, and therefore threatens their national security” (Rohr 1999: 3).

In particular, since the population of both Syria and Iraq is increasing substantially, food consumption and future food security are major problems for these countries. The issue of providing sufficient food is now becoming a global issue too, and it will be harder for countries such as Syria and Iraq to provide sufficient food if Turkey reduces the flow of water from the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. In recent years, despite a worldwide effort to provide sufficient food for the increasing global population through the use of advanced technology, it is becoming an increasingly serious problem. As McDonald (2010: 1) demonstrates, in recent decades, “Agricultural and food production activities have been recognized as key drivers of environmental and climate changes [but] [...] food production could face significant and widespread impacts from these changes in coming decades.”

Continuing population growth, rapid urbanization and rising energy demand, the water-food-energy nexus, and most importantly the impact of climate change and increasing constraints on natural resources, have made global food and nutrition security more difficult to achieve. In particular food production has come to be of central concern to the Middle East community, and to the world in general. By 2050, when the global population is projected to surpass 9 billion people, the demand for agricultural products will double (World Economic Forum 2012).

The fact that in order to resolve the future food issue, Syria and Iraq desperately need the flow of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and that Turkey is committed to building huge dams, particularly on the Euphrates, means that water scarcity will be a serious enough issue to lead to security concerns and complex problems. The water issue in the Middle East is undoubtedly crucial.

Having indicated that, if this thesis aimed to study water in relation to trans-boundary issues, or in relation to the issue of water scarcity in the Middle East, Kolars and Mitchell’s book would be very significant. However, for the purposes of this study, one needs to concentrate on analyzing their discussion of the GAP ‘social development’ project. Kolars and Mitchell emphasize that Turkey’s efforts with GAP comprise an integrated development plan, encompassing a wide array of physical, social and economic infrastructures. While they outline how the project would provide a substantial proportion of Turkish hydroelectric power needs and would be

capable of irrigating almost two million hectares of land, the aim of the project goes beyond irrigation and hydroelectric power plant schemes.

The infrastructure of GAP was not only established for the purpose of increasing hydroelectric power plants, irrigation schemes and supporting agriculture, but also for socio-economic and quality-of-life improvements, including transportation developments, non-farm employment opportunities, and education and health services in the south-east region. Once the project was completed, it would create significant economic, social and spatial changes in the region.

Although GAP costs over \$30 billion US dollars, when the project is fulfilled it would contribute annually around \$933 million to the Turkish economy. The Turkish state's aim was to introduce a profitable farming system by bringing massive amounts of land under irrigation in the GAP region, making the GAP project an important element in Turkey's national water and energy development programmes (Kolars and Mitchell 1991: 17). GAP policy-makers⁷⁰ strongly stress that the project has to be successfully completed, because they believe that the future power supply, growth in the national economy, and the development of south-eastern Turkey's economy in particular, depend on its success. The GAP policy-makers and economic planners were very optimistic about the project. According to Kolars and Mitchell (Ibid: 23) "they believe[d] the complex of hydroelectric dams and irrigation canals [would] greatly improve the economic and social life of the nation."

Kolars and Mitchell's book is essential in facilitating the understanding of the physical, social and economic infrastructure of the GAP project. They provide the necessary material to investigate it further, and they also offer a broad analysis of the geopolitical dimensions of the ambitions of water-development schemes in the region. However, their book was published in 1991, when the social development aspects of the GAP project were at the conceptual stage. Therefore their book is more about the promises offered by the Turkish state with regard to GAP and the socio-economy of the south-east than about outcomes. In this respect, the book is vitally useful for

⁷⁰ Regarding GAP-policy-makers' names, intentions, and their views on the project, see the work of Olcay Ünver (1997), who worked for GAP for 13 years as president, the current president of GAP, Sadrettin Karahocagil, who I interviewed in July 2011 at GAP Headquarters in Ankara, and the regional director, Mehmet Acikgöz. Researchers should also search the statements in relation to the GAP project of the ninth president of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel, as well as Turgut Özal, who also became president during the relevant period.

understanding the original GAP development plan, but it does not help us to see whether the project has succeeded in implementing its aims at a socio-economic level.

Nevertheless, like Kolars and Mitchell, Nurit Kliot's book, *Water Resources and Conflict in the Middle East* (1994), which is also significant for understanding the overall conception of GAP, states that there will be water shortages in the Middle East when Turkey completes its GAP project on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. She points out; "when Turkey completes its GAP plan, Syria could lose 40 per cent of its Euphrates waters" (Ibid: 143). According to Kliot, "When Syria completes its plans for water withdrawals from the Euphrates, as much as 30 per cent of the Euphrates flow will be reduced" (Ibid: 143). Kliot's concern is not only the shortages of water in the region but also the complexity of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, which are international rivers shared by Turkey, Syria and Iraq. Because of the complexity of the international river system, which creates complications in legal, political, economic and social terms, Kliot argues that "within the Tigris-Euphrates basin Turkish plans for water usage are going to reduce the amount of water available to its co-riparians significantly" (Ibid: 137); this may create a conflict in the Middle East.

In fact, the Syrian government made a clear statement to the international community that the GAP project would eventually "lead to something paramount to an environmental, social and cultural disaster for the Syrian state" (Knudsen 2003: 208). Turkey stated that once the dams were full, they would release the water flow. However, Syria's complaint was not only about quantity of water but also about the quality of water. "The series of dams built by Turkey upstream on the Euphrates means that the water reaching Syria has been used several times for irrigation, thus increasing salinity and harming crops, as well as causing erosion on the banks since it runs faster after being deprived of silt" (Darwish 1998).

So, Syria states that access to the Euphrates and Tigris' waters are based on ancient use, and therefore Syria has a historic right to use them for their own needs. Syria also claims that the Euphrates and the Tigris are international rivers. Iraq, which is downstream of both Syria and Turkey, also claims that it has historical rights to use the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. However, Turkey rejects the claims of Syria and Iraq, regarding the international "character of these two rivers and only speaks of the rational utilization of trans-boundary waters" (El-Fadel *et al* 2002: 103).

Syrian-Turkish relations got worse when, in 1988, President Turgut Özal said: "we don't tell Arabs what to do with their oil, so we don't accept any suggestion from

them about what to do with our water” (Darwish 1998). Özal’s intention was clearly to use water as a weapon against the Syrians, if Syria was going to continue to create a base for the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK).

In 1980, just before the military coup in Turkey, PKK leaders left the country and moved to the Syrian-controlled Beqa’ Valley, where militants first trained. In the Beqa’ Valley, in a very short time, many young women and men had joined the PKK (Marcus 1993). Syria’s support for the PKK was a significant threat to Turkey, and the Turkish state knew that the Syrian authorities supported the leader of the PKK, who had long resided in Damascus. Syria obviously wanted to use the PKK to put pressure on Turkey to “balance out the advantage held by Turkey over Syria in relation to control of the Euphrates water flows” (Yildiz 2005: 58). Every time Turkey demanded Syria close all the PKK training camps and stop logistical and financial support for the guerrillas, Syria denied Turkish “accusations of being a key source of support for the PKK” (El-Fadel *et al* 2002: 102-3).

Kliot’s book, like Kolars and Mitchell’s, is very significant with regard to water issues in relation to Syria and Turkey, and with regard to the issue of water security in the Middle East more generally. However, Kliot also reveals some aspects of the political significance of GAP in Turkey, with which we are more directly concerned here. For Kliot, the implementation of GAP in Turkey is a prestigious endeavour with a symbolic value for the Turkish state. GAP policy-makers predict that irrigation in the GAP region would bring 3.5 million new jobs and “the region [could] grow 4.1 million tons of beets, 1.3 million tons of oil-seeds, 117,900 tons of corn, 3.5 million tons of vegetables, 1.1 million tons of grapes, 685,000 tons of pistachio nuts and 660,000 tons of fruit” (Kliot 1994: 125). Thus, irrigation would contribute about 8% to the state’s annual economic growth. So, the GAP project, as a scheme of national importance and symbolic value, has become the highest priority for the Turkish authorities, and this explains why Turkey was ambitious to complete the project on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

There is no doubt that the project has attained symbolic value for the Turkish state and, according to my research, particularly for political party leaders, who used the project in their own interests, such as for collecting electoral votes in the south-east region. Nevertheless, Kliot’s book was also written at the very beginning of the GAP project, and is therefore mainly based on the contextual framework of the project. According to Kliot, GAP would create millions of new jobs and provide a

million tons of beets, oil-seeds, corn, vegetables, grapes, pistachio nuts and fruit. This thesis, in Chapter Five, will explore to what extent these predictions have been realized.

In understanding the aims and objectives of GAP, it is also worth reviewing the work of Olcay Ünver (1997). He stresses that, despite the fact that the animal stock was substantial in the south-east, its productivity was limited. Moreover, manufacturing industry in the region produced only 2% of Turkey's total. The proportion of the region's labour force engaged in industrial employment was 5% as compared with 16% for Turkey. However, Ünver (Ibid) argues that the region is very rich in water and land resources. The water of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers represent more than 28% of Turkey's water supply, and in terms of the economically irrigable areas in the GAP region, make up to 20% of those for the whole of Turkey.

Ünver also asserts that, with the completion of the GAP project, the region's ratio of irrigated land would boost production from 2.9% to 22.8% while that for rain-fed agriculture would decrease from 34.3% to 10.7%. So he claims that in the end, with the introduction of irrigation, agricultural production and crop variety would be significantly boosted. For instance, cropping intensity would be boosted from 89% to 134%. The most important shift would be for land used for cotton cultivation, which would be boosted from 2.8% to 25%. As a direct result, the project would increase agricultural production and thereby contribute to the development of infrastructure as well as boosting economic activities, which would speed up the development of agro-industry and other agricultural services activities.

Moreover, Ünver claims that the GAP region would be opened up to the outside world, which would attract additional investments. He argued in 1997 that there would be a massive increase in the population of the region, which would reach 10 million by 2005, over half of whom would live in cities. There would be increased urbanization in the region, and rural migration would slow down. Employment opportunities would be created for approximately 4 million people in a variety of sectors. The situation of education and health services would improve substantially in the region.

In short, according to Ünver, GAP, as an integrated regional development project, which "comprise[s] not only the multipurpose dams and irrigation systems but also modernization and investments in all development-related sectors such as agriculture, energy, transportation, telecommunications, health care, education, urban

and rural infrastructure development” (Ibid: 194) would improve the living standards of 6 million local people by mobilizing the natural resources of the region for integrated regional development.

The GAP project, as the most comprehensive, integrated regional development scheme ever attempted in Turkey, aimed to remove the socio-economic development ‘gap’ between the south-east area and more advanced, developed regions in Turkey. The project would offer sustainable modernization/development, which would defend and regenerate the environment and protect options for future generations. He concluded that “[e]quitable development, participation, protection of the environment, the creation of employment opportunities, improvement of the living standards of local people, promotion of land-use planning and the integrated provision of infrastructure are the main strategies of the GAP approach” (Ibid: 482). The project was offered as a form of sustainable development.

Ünver, who worked for 13 years as the president of the GAP Regional Development Administration⁷¹ and claimed that GAP would be complete by the year 2010, provides important reading in relation to GAP’s overall objectives. Whilst I found Ünver’s work, as a former President of GAP, useful regarding the project’s objectives and programmes, not only for the south-east but also for the entire country, he does not distinguish between the region’s cultural, social and political conditions and those of the rest of the country. His work is simply based on an explanation of the project, without reference to the historical and current reality of the south-east, which is what concerns me.

To conclude, the above literature regarding the implementation of the GAP ‘social development’ project provides an important framework for grasping the project’s objectives and aims, and provides significant factual perspectives on the project. Having said that, it does not tell us much about the manifestation of the project and the factors that forced Turkey to consider such a project in the south-east, a region which Turkey had neglected socially and economically for decades. Of course, there are many reasons why Turkey came to the conclusion, in the late 1980s, that utilizing the water of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for economic growth in the south-east would be beneficial. However, the concept of modernization/development

⁷¹ See more about Olcay Ünver’s biography as the Coordinator of GAP in www.un.org/ga/president/64/thematic/water/OlcayUnver.pdf; and Gap kalkınma idaresi başkanı olcay ünver: "gap'in yüzde 50, www.porttakal.com/ Haber Arşivi/ Mart 1999 (accessed 28 March 2014).

was employed by Turkish policy-makers in order to get rid of traditional society in the region, something which Turkey saw as a threat, mainly because it could not impose its authority there as it did in the past, and thus they were attempting to instigate a modern form of society in the region. The following section discusses literature that points out the political agenda behind the GAP ‘social development’ project.

4.3. Politicization of the GAP ‘social development’ project

There are numerous studies focusing on political aspects of the GAP ‘social development’ project and on the role of the Euphrates and the Tigris river waters in the region. Before I analyze the literature in relation to the politicization of the project, it is crucial to briefly outline the significant role of these waters, which Turkey wanted to use not only for its domestic needs but also for its external politics.

For instance, Arab states, under the umbrella of Pan-Arabic ideology, established a regional economic and political regime, in order to co-operate for common goals and the unity of Arab nations.⁷² However, when it came to the issue of water, the case was complicated by the fact that they rely on external water, mainly from Israel and Turkey. Despite the fact that the Arab states are nearer to Israeli water, because of their ongoing conflict they will not negotiate or co-operate with Israel. Thus, the only state that Arabs can co-operate with is upstream Turkey. Turkish religious and historical relations with Arabs make such co-operation possible.

Since Turkey has been aware of the possibilities of its unique position enabling it to be the hydro-hegemonic power in the Middle East, it has propagated the pipelines as “peace pipelines”. Schulz (1995: 117-18) observed that the Turkish state uses most of the water for itself, and she put forward a proposal for water pipelines which would take water from the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers and send it through one ‘western pipeline’ and one ‘Gulf pipeline’, thus pacifying Arab states. While the western pipeline was intended to take water to Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, the second pipeline would pass through Iraq to the Gulf states and finally reach Oman,

⁷² These are as follows: “The League of Arab States, the Council for Arab Economic Unity, the Arab Common Market, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and Arab Monetary Fund” (Schulz 1995: 97).

and it was considered that these “would transport 2.5 million cubic metres per day” (Ibid: 117-18).

In 1991, at the water summit in Turkey (which was perhaps the first step in discussions over the pipeline), there were 24 Middle Eastern states present and representatives from the United States, as well as representatives from Africa, Europe and Japan. As Schulz (Ibid: 119) comments, “the peace pipeline seems to provide a reason for every state in the region to consider the probable potential benefits.” The idea of Turkey introducing two water pipelines was not only to regain its dominant role in the Middle East but also for the purpose of its national security. It has been stated that Turkey is well aware that the scarcity of water in the Middle East may destabilize the region and this would never be good for Turkey.

However, despite the efforts of the Turkish state, the “peace pipelines” project never became reality. This was mainly because of Syria’s negative approach. In 1992, Syria told the Arab League that the Turkish Peace Pipeline suggestion was a plot to deliver substantial quantities of water to Israel. Also some Arab countries were sceptical about the control and expense of the project (Gruen 2000). In fact Turkey wanted to become a powerful state via its water. It was in the process of attempting to establish regional hydro-hegemony by virtue of its upstream location; it was hoping not only to ensure regional security for the south-east, but also, through hydro-hegemony, to gain a strategic position over Syria and Iraq, which would enhance its internal as well as external security and would contribute “to the long-term military-political goal of macro-regional hegemony” (Warner 2004: 19). However, since my main purpose here is to study the literature on the GAP ‘social development’ project and its politicization, I will leave further investigation of the subject to students concerned with Turkish international politics in the Middle East region in relation to the water project, a significant issue that needs further study.

For Shiva (2002), the main purpose of the GAP project was clear; in order to control the population and sever people’s relations with the PKK, the state’s aim was to drive Kurdish people out of their small villages into the big cities, thus making it easier to crush uprisings. Shiva touches on a crucial point, one which was raised by many of my interviewees in the south-east, the fact that Turkey wants to use GAP as a political tool to control the Kurds; and one should consider further investigation regarding the political implications of the project. As I indicated in Chapter Three, Turkey had introduced policies intended to crush the very existence of the Kurds. The

question arises whether the GAP project was conceived for a similar purpose. It is argued that, once the Turkish state became aware that the PKK was turning into its most serious internal challenge, it began to change its policy on the Kurdish region. Instead of fighting physically, the Turkish state began to implement a different strategy. On the one hand, the state carried out tough measures against those who asserted their ethnic identity, and on the other hand, it began to appease the Kurdish population by directing economic aid to the region, focusing mainly on agriculture, in particular through the huge Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP) (Entessar 1992: 98).

Turgut Özal, who was the chief economic planner from 1980 to 1983, was “given wide leeway to restructure the Kurdish economy for the purpose of integrating it into the international capitalist market” (Ibid: 95). The idea was to control the Kurds by integrating them into international capitalist society. This was one of the main reasons that the GAP project became reality. In this respect, Shiva’s theory points to a crucial aspect of Turkey’s GAP policy.

In order to understand the GAP ‘social development’ project and its sustainable human development targets, including its political framework, the work of Leila Harris is also important. While Harris (2002) indicates that the GAP project might lead to future insecurity and instability in the Middle East, her main concern goes beyond conceptualization of water and conflict in the region. Instead she situates and reveals the ‘social development’ project in the context of the ongoing conflict between the Kurdish guerillas and the Turkish state. To be more specific, she argues that GAP must be understood “within the context of disputes related to the history of Kurdish separatism, and related to population, military, and rebel movements throughout the border regions with Syria and Iraq” (Ibid: 749).

The Kurdish question has always been a complex and sensitive subject in Turkey, “exacerbated by its trans state nature and complications related to identity politics and ethnic associations that may be pluralistic in character” (Ibid: 749). The concept and policies of the GAP ‘social development’ project should be perceived and assessed in relation to the long history of Turkish-Kurdish relations, and it needs to be examined in relation to aggressive Turkish state policies toward the region. According to my research there is still a lack of work revealing the significance of Kurdish politics in relation to GAP. Understanding the idea of the GAP project as central to the future of the Kurdish dispute, according to Harris, implies that there are significant connections between water development and the dispute that remain

underexplored. It can be argued that the GAP ‘social development’ project serves as the integrating resource that has the ability to resolve long-standing disputes in the south-east “and to connect state economic, resource, political, economic, and security interests” (Ibid: 752). She adds that the concept of ‘social development’ in the GAP project would offer a limited “economic response to some of the larger legitimacy and territorial concerns in the region with the possibility that improvement of living standards in the southeast may undermine bases for Kurdish separatism and enhance legitimacy of the Turkish state” (Ibid: 752).

However, Harris argues that the development of GAP could have positive outcomes for the Kurds. She claims that GAP could potentially improve living standards in the region and also encourage urban and industrial development in those areas. Such improvements could possibly lead to a reduction in the Kurdish demand for self-determination or collective rights.

Harris (Ibid) concludes that Turkey’s efforts to be accepted by the European Union meant that conflict in the south-east was likely to accelerate. Acceptance by the EU was dependent on Turkey overcoming its negative reputation regarding human rights and providing reassurance that economic progress was on target in the south-east. While GAP could be approved of for pursuing valid socio-economic development goals in the region, such a venture could not resolve more complex issues relating to “social, political, economic and ecological relations inherent in shifting water and conflict geographies” (Ibid: 757). Harris provides significant insight in terms of the implications of historical relations between the Turkish state and the Kurds in the context of the role of GAP development in the region. Harris informs us of some critical approaches towards the notion of the GAP project, but does not discuss how the project emerged, or to what extent it was influenced by the idea of ‘modernization/development’ in the world. Having raised this important factor regarding GAP, she does not explore the contribution of the project in practice, and there is no clear evidence that GAP has played a role in achieving any of the benefits she refers to. What is crucial to my work is that GAP has been influenced by the modernization/development concept but struggles to reach its socio-economic targets because of unpredictable obstacles in the south-east, which this study is going to explore.

For Nilay Özok-Gündogan (2005), the GAP ‘social development’ project is based on two interrelated issues. She asserts that, first, both the idea and practice of

development shifted in accordance with the requirements of world capitalism. In this framework, the idea of 'social development' came to mean something different from what it had meant in the post-World War II period. So the discourse of global development "was transformed in the 1980s under the neo-liberal restructuring of world economy and politics" (Ibid: 93). She suggests that the idea of 'development' has functioned as a globally hegemonizing discourse used by state authorities to control the populations within their borders. In the second edition of her work, she argues that the practices of the GAP 'social development' project "are appropriations of a global discourse within a particular spatial and temporal context" (Ibid: 93). Özok-Gündogan's work raises some crucial issues in terms of understanding GAP 'social development' in relation to the discourse of global development which has persisted under neo-liberalism. She points out that the core concept of the 'social development' project is a process, which was formed "in accordance with historically specific governmental rationalities rather than an abstract idea that works everywhere in the same way and for the same ends" (Ibid: 109). Her work is also important when it comes to understanding parts of the abstract policy of the Turkish state in the GAP region since the 1980s, in particular during the 1990s. It indicates that, in the late 1980s, the transformation of GAP from a land/water resources scheme into an integrated social development project was the consequence of the state's policy in dealing with the war between Kurdish guerrillas and Turkish state authorities in the south-east region. It was hoped that the transformation of GAP into a rigorous social development programme would provide a gradual solution to the Kurdish question.

Özok-Gündogan argues that the social development aspects of the GAP project developed as a result of the increasing conflict within the region during the 1990s. It became clear to the Turkish authorities that resistance to Turkish dominance was stronger than had been anticipated and could not therefore be resolved by military measures alone. Thus, there was an urgent need to improve social and economic conditions within the region via GAP in order to attempt to resolve the problem. However, in relation to the concept of the GAP 'social development' project, I suggest that we should look at what GAP and modernization/development have in common rather than stating that Turkey employed the discourse of global development to control the population of the south-east.

Nevertheless, Okmen's work (2002) regarding the 'social functioning' of the GAP project and the ways in which it caused large scale displacement of the local

population needs to be taken into consideration. In particular, he assesses the dams in the south-east, in particular comparing the Keban Dam (completed in 1964) with the current South-east Anatolia project, and reveals “the driving forces behind it and the continuities of state policy and social performance of hydro-project based development and, as its consequence, development - induced displacement in Turkey.” He argues that “in comparing the Keban Dam and the GAP project, a great deal of continuity might be inferred in Turkey's energy policy and its implicit policy of dispersal of Kurdish villagers.” He concludes that there has been no real change in government policy since the construction of the Keban Dam in terms of procedures and legislation relating to compensation and resettlement planning. The GAP project stayed within strategic state policies devised during the Keban project or before.

The above literature reviews have not only provided me with excellent material concerning GAP and its ‘social development’ project but also about the approach of the Turkish state and its policies in the south-east regarding the project. However, the main question which arises is: has GAP reached its social development goal? The above works do not broadly assess the current condition of GAP ‘social development’ with which this study is mainly concerned.

4.4. Obstacles to the progress of the GAP ‘social development’ project

Despite books and articles addressing the implementation of GAP, the literature does not take a sufficiently broad view of the empirical and theoretical implications of the incompleteness of the GAP ‘social development’ project. Apparently, since the project officially exists on blue paper and Turkey claims it is progressing, almost no scholars directly discuss the main obstacles that have delayed the implementation of GAP modernization/development programmes. There are some limited works on the progress of the project, though they do not provide satisfactory and convincing reasons as to why it has not yet enriched the region. There follows an examination of the most relevant literature on the progress of the project.

According to Çarkoglu and Eder, the unfinished nature of the GAP project may be to do with the absence of local participation and “the top-down implementation of the project and ‘high modernisation’ strategy by the state” (2005: 168); or the issue of mutual distrust between the locals/Kurds and Turkish state authority in the region, which may all have resulted in its failure to reach its main

targets. Or, is this just another typical case of the failure of developmentalism that we have witnessed elsewhere in the world, which many scholars consider to be a weakly implemented, politically unjustifiable and highly unworkable strategy “that ‘succeeded’ in certain instrumental goals but is doomed for failure given its isolation from the region’s population” (Ibid: 171).

During my fieldwork in the south-east, many of my interviewees acknowledged that GAP was implemented from the ‘top-down’, so many locals were not even aware of what GAP meant. Chapter Five will focus on ‘top-down’ issues in more detail, mainly by revealing the views of interviewees, in the context of an examination of whether there are any hidden Turkish state politics involved in the project. What Carkoglu and Eder fail to state is that the approach of the Turkish state towards the ‘social development’ project has been fragmented by regional and international political factors, upon which this study is going to focus.

Additionally, Ercin states that the “high population growth rate, incomplete realization and delay in investments due to insufficient public and private investments, regression of Turkish economy, ethnic and security problems” (2006: 235) may be the main issues negatively impacting on the project. However, the main factor emerging from the literature related to this study is that, despite important progress with the project in the energy sector, the concept of the integrated regional development project is far behind in its objectives and targets.

Altinbilek and Tortajada (2012) claim that some gains have been made by GAP; per capita income had grown from 47% of average national income in 1985 to 55% by 2001; the region’s hydroelectric power plants provided 74% of all energy at the national level by 2005. However, they argue that, despite such significant achievements, the GAP project as an integrated regional development scheme is far behind in achieving the objectives and goals set out in the Master Plan. For Altinbilek and Tortajada (Ibid), not enough funding has been allocated by the government to GAP, and they consider this to be a key reason for the lack of implementation of the social development project.

Notwithstanding, the literature informs us that GAP was transformed from a water/land resource project into a multi-sector integrated regional development project for the underdeveloped south-east, an ambitious modernization strategy by the highest level of the Turkish state and supported by the Turkish ruling elite (Kolars and Michell 1991; Ozok-Gundogan 2005; Carkoglu and Eder 2005). The strategies of

the state and “policies related to regional development have stayed largely unimproved” (Okmen 2002).

The literature shows that, since the creation of the republic, Turkish policy-makers have not taken the development of the agricultural sector seriously. The question arises as to whether it isn't paradoxical to anticipate that the GAP project “will boost agricultural production in order to contribute to nationwide goals of economic development, given the diminishing trend of the sector” (Varsamidis 2010). Despite the fact that the project has made some positive achievements regarding its targets with regard to industry, education (in Turkish, not in the locals' own languages, including Kurdish, Arabic or those of other ethnic groups in the region), health, migration, communication and public services, Varsamidis comments that “the GAP project does not seem to have improved the economic dimension of sustainability and the economic well-being of the people in the region” (Ibid: 86). Notwithstanding, it is argued that one of the reasons that GAP has not reached its target is because it faced a lack of administrative capacity and “the structural challenges posed by the institutional framework of public investments without reforming the entire public administration structure” (Beleli 2005).

Another issue impacting on GAP may be the attacks by environmentalists and international news agencies, who claimed that it would not meet international standards (for instance, the Ilisu Dam did not meet international standards in terms of environmental protection, resettlement and archaeological sites (KHRP 21 August 2007)).⁷³ Hence, while the literature provides questions as to whether the GAP project has progressed in meeting its objectives and targets for the socio-economic development of the region, it also includes the EU criteria on regional stability, environmental issues and human rights - including the issue of displaced people in the region, and Syria and Iraq's dependence on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for the agriculture sector and food security. More specifically, the literature establishes that the project has not only struggled in meeting its targets and objectives, but has also been ineffective in protecting the environment, as well as raising “more obstacles for Turkey's full membership to the EU” (Varsamidis 2010: 86).

Based on the most relevant literature reviews that I have provided, and also

⁷³ The campaign by environmentalists, and also by Syria and Iraq, who once managed to block international financial assistance for completing the project; and broad overall criticism of the objectives of the GAP project (Warner 2011).

empirical work in the region, it appears that the project has delivered some of its promises, in particular for Turkish energy needs, but not for the socio-economic development of the south-east. The evidence indicates that the project has not yet played a role in changing the region's long-standing socio-economic underdevelopment and it continues to be the poorest part of Turkey.

Having assessed the overall literature on the GAP and its 'social development project, my work does not expand on most of the issues raised above, but the literature discussed is significant for understanding overall features of the GAP project and some significant factors relating to its current condition. In relation to the above views, in order to understand the GAP 'social development' project and analyze obstacles preventing its realization, there is an inter-related course of analysis of theoretical and empirical data presented across the whole study. In order to understand what were and are the main obstacles preventing the project's realization, I argue that there are four factors that should be examined: (1) the rise of the Kurdish national movement; (2) shifting balance of political power; (3) the failure of the Turkish state to provide a perpetual peace process with the Kurdish movement in the region; (4) the approach of the Turkish state towards cosmopolitan democracy.

4.5. Concluding remarks

I have stressed that most public discourse and that of the Turkish government regarding GAP hold the project to be a 'social development' scheme that would create economic, social and spatial changes, aimed at ending the chronic poverty of the south-east/Kurdish region by raising locals' income levels and living standards, providing social stability and economic growth by enhancing the employment capacity of the regional sector, and creating socio-economic integration between the underdeveloped south-east/Kurds and the industrialized west/Turks.

This chapter has provided an outline summary of literature on the GAP 'social development' project and its constituent programmes, which were supposed to improve the south-east region's socio-economy. The chapter has also looked at literature that indicates that GAP has become politicized and may be being used by the Turkish state to ameliorate the Kurdish question through the 'social development' programmes. Finally, the incompleteness of the 'social development' project has been alluded to by most of the relevant literature which takes a sufficiently broad view of

the implications of GAP and its current situation in relation to the ‘social development’ project. However, in order to grasp the core concept of GAP, it is necessary to go beyond the overall literature, investigate GAP’s progress as a sustainable regional development project, and find out whether there are hidden policies driving it. Thus the following chapter, which is mainly based on my primary data, will discuss the policies of the Turkish state regarding the GAP ‘social development’ project and views on the progress of GAP.

CHAPTER FIVE

The progress and political tone of the GAP ‘social development’ project

5.1. Introduction

Since the GAP ‘social development’ project is involved with regional politics, it needs a broad examination to make it comprehensible. The previous three chapters have examined the background of the project. While Chapter Two mainly focused on the formation of the project and its historical background, Chapter Three scrutinized Turkish modernization overall from the very beginning of the republic, and assessed the unequal social development between the south-east and the rest of the country. In order to narrow the gap between the socio-economic situation in the south-east and the developed regions of Turkey, policy-makers transformed the GAP project, which was based entirely on water/land resources, into a ‘social development’ project, involving the regional socio-economic and socio-political, if not geo-political, factors. In this context, Chapter Four assessed the literature on the project, which enlightens us regarding the ways in which it has been involved with regional politics.

So, along with the empirical data, this chapter assesses the GAP ‘social development’ project and investigates whether it has made any positive progress towards enabling sustainable development of the region. Apart from analyzing GAP in relation to the region’s socio-economic development, the chapter mainly focuses on the interviewees’ views on the project in an attempt to explore its results. Firstly the progress of GAP, including its strategies and plans, is analyzed, mainly through examining the data published by the Turkish state⁷⁴ in relation to GAP, independent

⁷⁴ See State Planning Organization (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatının (DPT)), in Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (USİAD) GAP Raporu, GAP’ta ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler Editör: Dursun Yıldız Hazırlayan: ADA Strateji, 2008, İstanbul; Illerin ve Bölgelerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Gelişmişlik Sıralaması Arastırması (SEGE-2011), T.C.Kalkınma Bakanlığı, Bilgi ve Belge Yönetimi Dairesi Başkanlı, Ankara 2013, www.cnnturk.com/2012/ekonomi/.../662420.0/ (accessed 25.05.2012); GAP Action Plan Investigation and Assessment Report (Gap Eylem Planı İnceleme ve Değerlendirme Raporu) 2008-2012, May 2008, in GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx; GAP, T.C. Başbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma Başkanlığı, Bölgesel Kalkınmanın Can Suyu: GAP, Karsılastırmalı Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapı Arastırması, T.C. Başbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı ve sosyoloji Derneği, 2010, Ankara; GAP Nedir - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 6 May 2014).

resources⁷⁵ and my empirical work, which together provide an outline of where the project stands in relation to the region's socio-economic development. These data will clarify to what extent GAP has made progress. Secondly, I examine my interviewees' perspectives on GAP and analyze to what extent the project has been used as a political tool in the region. So the chapter is divided into a 'Critical Analysis on GAP as a Social Development Project: Unsustainable Programme, Strategies and Plan' and 'GAP: 'Top-Down' Project, Strengthening State Authority and Hidden Politics'.

5.2. Critical analysis of GAP as a social development project: unsustainable programme, strategies and plan

Chapter Four outlined the overall literature on GAP and examined the politicization of the project, explaining how it has been conditioned by certain factors. Later in this thesis, I will describe some concrete factors regarding the conditions of the social development scheme, and provide the reasons as to why the project has been trapped in an unworkable situation. However, it is important to begin by scrutinizing the current socio-economic conditions in the south-east region, to see whether GAP has been beneficial for the region's economic growth and to what extent it has provided social development there. The data that I have collected shows that no serious attempt to achieve GAP's stated objective in relation to 'social development' has taken place.

This research and also independent surveys on the social and economic structure of the south-east region undertaken by various institutions such as the National Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association (Ulusal Sanayici ve Isamaları Derneği (USİAD)) and the Sociological Association (Sosyoloji Derneği), have addressed the fact that GAP as a 'social development' project lags far behind the target of the GAP-Master Plan (see more regarding independent surveys in note 2 above).

⁷⁵ Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (USİAD) GAP Raporu, GAP'ta ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler Editör: Dursun YILDIZ Hazırlayan: ADA Strateji, 2008, İstanbul; CNNTurk.com.webarchive/ 25.05.2012, web archive of Turkish national news channel CNN Turk; bir bölgesel dönüşüm projesi olarak gap - Sosyoloji Derneği, www.sosyolojiderneği.org.tr/.../Gokce_birsen.pdf; gap eylem planı inceleme ve değerlendirme raporu - emo www.emo.org.tr/.../d73f5b6b5d8b428_ek.pdf?tipi...; *Türk Mühendis Ve Mimar Odaları Birliği* (TMMOB) Diyarbakir İl Koordinasyon Kurulu [GAP Action Plan and Review Report, criticism and recommendations by Turkey Architecture, Engineering and Coordination Centre, Chamber, Diyarbakir Coordination Board]; Kurdish Human Rights Project: KHRP, www.khrp.org, GAP publication (accessed 6 May 2014).

The plan stated that employment in the region's industry should increase from 16% to 24% of total employment, and the services sector from 44% to 53%, and the Gross Regional Development Index should increase 4.5 times by 2005. The region's population was expected to reach over 9 million during the same period and GAP was supposed to provide 3.5 million jobs (USİAD 2008). However, this study indicates that none of these targets have been achieved.

According to USİAD report, people in 1995 in the GAP region emigrated from the provinces as a result of poverty as follows: Adıyaman 70.2%, Diyarbakır 40%, Mardin 67%, Siirt 75.1%, Şanlıurfa 38.9%, Batman 45.2%, Kilis 38.9%. In Gaziantep, only 3% emigrated, because it was comparatively developed in relation to the other eight provinces, and, contrastingly, 21.8% migrated to the nearby town of Siirt, because many local villages had been evacuated or burnt down by Turkish state security (as part of the war between Kurdish guerrillas and the Turkish army). While overall the GAP region absorbed only 9,449 inhabitants (mainly state employed workers such as teachers and the security force), a total of 219,339 people emigrated from the region to the cities. It is true that many locals have had to migrate because of the war between Kurdish guerrillas and the Turkish army, particularly in the 1990s, but poverty was and still is the main trigger for people to leave their villages and homes seeking a new life in the west of Turkey.⁷⁶ GAP was supposed to create integration between the south-east/Kurdish region and the rest of Turkey. My research reveals that this has not occurred.

Moreover, according to the State Planning Organization (SPO) research,⁷⁷ there has not been any considerable socio-economic development in the nine provinces of the GAP region except Gaziantep. Between 1996 and 2003, according to this research, all other provinces in the region were the least developed areas in Turkey (USİAD 2008), and this is still the case.

While Adıyaman city was 61st, in 1996, in terms of socio-economic growth, by 2003 it had declined to 65th. Diyarbakır was 57th - it declined to 63rd. Mardin was 66th - it declined to 72nd. Siirt was 68th - it declined to 73rd. Although Şanlıurfa was irrigated at the very beginning of the project, in 1996 it was 59th, but by 2003, it had

⁷⁶See Batı'ya Kürt Göçü ve G.Doğu'yu Kalkındırma Söylemi...1, www.iktisatvetoplum.com/.../mustafa-sonmez-batiya (accessed April 2015).

⁷⁷ State Planning Organization (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatının (DPT)), in, Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (USİAD) GAP Raporu, GAP'ta ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler Editör: Dursun Yıldız Hazırlayan: ADA Strateji, 2008, İstanbul.

fallen to 68th. Batman was 65th and went down to 70th, Sirnak was 75th and fell to 78th. Kilis was 54th in 2003, and its place in the Turkish economy remained the same because it was affiliated to the industrialized city of Gaziantep.⁷⁸ The overall situation in terms of socio-economic development in the region has not changed much since the project plan was unveiled. People from the region have continued to seek jobs in other parts of the country and, the predominance of seasonal workers are evidence that GAP has not been beneficial to the region.⁷⁹

According to the statistical data for the year 2004 (Ibid), the overall unemployment rate is 10.6%, and the non-agricultural unemployment rate is 16% in the region. The overall literacy rate is 73.22% in the region, and 60% of women are illiterate (Ibid). Socio-economic underdevelopment in the region has not only created migration to the big cities, but has also brought other problems such as unemployment in those cities, uneven economic growth, unplanned urbanization, crime and smuggling.⁸⁰ According to the surveys,⁸¹ the majority of people in the region did not have an income sufficient for living. 75% of the population has not got the jobs..The surveys indicated that for the previous three years the unemployment figure for heads of household reached 85.2% in the region. The province of Diyarbakir contained one of the highest unemployment figures, and in the province of Mardin, for instance, according to 2010 data, 85.7% of people had not had a job in the previous three years.

There is no doubt that GAP has made some significant progress in irrigation (see Chapter Six), in particular with regard to power production, providing almost 50% of Turkey's energy consumption.⁸² President, Karahocagil (personal interview,

⁷⁸ See more: Ulusal Sanayici ve İşadamları Derneği (USİAD) (2008), *GAP Raporu, GAP'ta ne Oldu! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler*. See also Devlet Planlama Teşkilatının (DPT) [State Planning Organization] in the same work.

⁷⁹ See more detail regarding seasonal workers from the south-east in the following: BBC Türkçe, *HDP'den baraja karşı mevsimlik işçi atağı*, www.bbc.com/.../150531_mevsimlik_isciler; Yüz binlerce mevsimlik işçi her yıl ülkeyi tarla tarla dolaşıyorlar, www.bugun.com.tr/.../yuz...mevsimlik_isciler; Mevsimlik işçiler güneydoğudan batıya trenlerle göç ediyor, www.cihan.com.tr/.../mevsimlik-isciler-guneydogudan; Mevsimlik işçiler Güneydoğu'dan Batı'ya trenlerle göç ediyor, haber.stargundem.com/Ekonomi (5 June 2015).

⁸⁰ See GAP, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma Başkanlığı, Bölgesel Kalkınmanın Can Suyu: GAP, Karsılastırmalı Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapı Arastirmasi, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı ve sosyoloji Derneği, 2010, Ankara.

⁸¹ See GAP, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma Başkanlığı, Bölgesel Kalkınmanın Can Suyu: GAP, Karsılastırmalı Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapı Arastirmasi, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı ve sosyoloji Derneği, 2010, Ankara.

⁸² See GAP'ta Son Durum - TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_ta_son_durum.aspx (accessed 7 July 2015).

July 2011) said during my interview with him:

Although the state could not guarantee all social development projects would work perfectly, it stressed that whatever happens with the project, all dams will be completed. Until now, we have spent 20 billion Turkish lira on the project and the recent statement shows that we made 18 billion out of energy production. This is enough in itself. The project is self-profitable.

Moreover, my interview with the regional director, Mr Mehmet Acikgoz (personal interview, July 2011), produced another significant factor in terms of energy:

28% of the surface waters of Turkey comprise the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and Turkey wants to utilize this water for its energy production. So, one thing that we should know is that even if ‘social development’ does not work properly, Turkey will still have gained high energy production anyway.

Although the above statements indicate that Turkey has benefited from energy production, the following statements and data show that GAP has not been beneficial in terms of regional socio-economic growth. According to SEGE’s 2011 research,⁸³ as is evident from the following table, the region has not improved socio-economically, but gone backwards. The table indicates the economic development of Turkish provinces.

Socio-Economic Development Ranking of Provinces

İstanbul	1	Karabük	28	Aksaray	55
Ankara	2	Zonguldak	29	Niğde	56
İzmir	3	Gaziantep	30	Tokat	57
Kocaeli	4	Trabzon	31	Tunceli	58
Antalya	5	Karaman	32	Erzurum	59

⁸³ See more in Illerin ve Bölgelerin Sosyo-Ekonomik Gelismislik Sıralamasi Arastirmasi (SEGE-2011), T.C.Kalkinma Bakanligi, Bilgi ve Belge Yönetimi Dairesi Baskanli, Ankara 2013, www.cnnturk.com/2012/ekonomi/.../662420.0/ (accessed 25 May 2012).

Bursa	6	Samsun	33	Kahramanmaraş	60
Eskişehir	7	Rize	34	Ordu	61
Muğla	8	Düzce	35	Gümüşhane	62
Tekirdağ	9	Nevşehir	36	Kilis	63
Denizli	10	Amasya	37	Bayburt	64
Bolu	11	Kütahya	38	Yozgat	65
Edirne	12	Elazığ	39	Adıyaman	66
Yalova	13	Kırşehir	40	Diyarbakır	67
Çanakkale	14	Kırıkkale	41	Kars	68
Kırklareli	15	Malatya	42	Iğdır	69
Adana	16	Afyon	43	Batman	70
Kayseri	17	Artvin	44	Ardahan	71
Sakarya	18	Erzincan	45	Bingöl	72
Aydın	19	Hatay	46	Şanlıurfa	73
Konya	20	Kastamonu	47	Mardin	74
Isparta	21	Bartın	48	Van	75
Balıkesir	22	Sivas	49	Bitlis	76
Manisa	23	Çorum	50	Siirt	77
Mersin	24	Sinop	51	Şırnak	78
Uşak	25	Giresun	52	Ağrı	79
Burdur	26	Osmaniye	53	Hakkari	80
Bilecik	27	Çankırı	54	Muş	81

www.ab.gov.tr/files/.../tckb_sege_2013.pdf (Accessed 4 May 2015).

As is indicated in bold, the above table shows that apart from Gaziantep, which is Turkish-Kurdish populated and industrialized, and Kilis, the provinces are the lowest areas in terms of economic and social development, other than Kurdish cities elsewhere such as Mus, Hakkari, Agri, Bitlis, Van, Bingol, Ardahan, Iğdir and Kars, which are not located in the GAP region but in the east of Turkey. So while the project was supposed to create prosperity for the south-east, the region has continued to plunge further into a difficult situation.

Altan Tan, local MP and member of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi* (BDP)) (personal interview, June, 2011), argued

that the idea that the GAP ‘social development’ project would create massive jobs and opportunities and bring about the end of poverty in the south-east, was merely a mask. He declared:

If this was not a mask, then irrigation would have already taken place. 85% of the dams project is completed but only 15-17% of irrigation canals are completed, though some of these dams were completed 10 years ago. There is water in the dams but no water in the fields.

Tan claimed that while water has been transferred to the province of Sanliurfa, or Urfa, which is mainly populated by Arabs, who are supporters of the Turkish state, provinces such as Diyarbakir, populated mainly by Kurds, only received 5% of the water transfer. The towns of Harran and Suruç in the province of Urfa were critical in evaluating how the ‘social development’ project has been functioning in different ways. Both towns have equally profitable land for irrigation, however they have been affected differently by the project.

Harran’s plain has been one of the Turkish government’s most successful propaganda tools. Irrigation has transformed the dry Plain of Harran, turning it into a massive area of fertile land, and the people of the town have consequently benefited from the Atatürk Dam. During my visit to Harran in June 2011, people gave thanks to the government for the way their land had been made profitable by the dam’s 26.4 km long tunnels of water. My participants’ answers from this pro-Turkish, mainly Arab inhabited town confirmed how useful it had been to have the water transferred from the Atatürk Dam to their lands, and were full of thanks and happiness that they could irrigate their land. One participant (who declined to give his name) said, “Since we received water for irrigation, we now have everything we need and almost everyone has their private car. This was never the case before.”

However, despite Suruç being one of the most productive lands in the south-east region, in contrast with the Harran Plain,⁸⁴ and one that has been promised water

⁸⁴ See more regarding Suruç’s productivity in Dünyanın en iyi narı Suruç a yetiştiriyor haberi, www.internethaber.com/dunyanin-en-iyi-nari-Suruca; Suruç Narı Dünyanın En iyi Nar Çeşitleri Arasında - Urfa ..., www.urfahaber.net/.../Suruç-nari-dunyanin-en-iyi-nar (accessed 8 April 2015).

from the Atatürk Dam, this water has not yet been transferred.⁸⁵ One of the participants from Suruç (personal interview, name not given, June 2011)⁸⁶ said: “We are being punished by the Turkish state for being Kurds.” My participants from Suruç complained that during national elections, almost every political leader or their representatives would go there to promise them that they would transfer water, but once the elections were over, all they were left with were a few water pipes near the town. One of the participants commented: “This is all politics.” Another participant (no name given) said:

I well remember, after the 1980s military coup, when Kenan Evren⁸⁷ came here, he promised us that the government would transfer water to our land. But because we have been pro-Kurdish in our attitudes, we have not received water since then; and this was a decision taken by the Turkish Security Council.

In recent years, despite efforts to provide sufficient food for the increasing global population using developed technology, food scarcity is becoming an increasingly serious problem. As Bryan McDonald (2010: 1) demonstrates, in recent decades, “Agricultural and food production activities have been recognized as key drivers of environmental and climate changes [...] food production could face significant and widespread impacts from these changes in coming decades.” So the decrease in food security concerns many states which are unable to avoid problems related to health, environment, human, national and international security.

⁸⁵ Before I went to Suruç, I knew two things about the town: it was well known for its pomegranates and the town was very pro-Kurdish, many Kurdish guerillas coming from the town. Although the land belonging to the town is part of GAP’s project plan for irrigation and is near the Atatürk Dam, the water has not yet been transferred, despite Suruç being among the most productive lands in the region. The whole Suruç plain was now a dry desert, despite the popularity of its pomegranates, which enjoyed local irrigation from the spring water around the town. When I interviewed people from the town, I was told that since the Birecik and Atatürk dams were built, the water has now mysteriously disappeared. The people from Suruç believed that they were being punished by the state for being pro-Kurds, in that water was not being supplied to them yet. The group of people I interviewed from Suruç told me that while Suruç used to export pomegranates, it was clearly unable to do so now, and they believed that the water-lines underground have been blocked by engineers in order to fill the Atatürk dam.

⁸⁶ Because Suruç town is very pro-Kurdish and many Kurdish guerillas come from the town, many of my participants were concerned that they should remain anonymous.

⁸⁷ Kenan Evren, former chief of staff, who was a leading commander in the 1980 coup and was later installed as President of Turkey, delivered “the right to veto constitutional amendments and appoint constitutional court judges” (Jacoby 2005: 647).

The Turkish state's failure to complete the canals in Suruç raises many questions which need to be investigated in further research. One of the participants from Suruç (no name given, June 2011) said, "even if the state decided to complete the water pipes to irrigate Suruç land, it would not be for the socio-economy of Suruç but to serve Turkish multi-purpose interests." Such strong statements from Suruç participants reveal a historical mistrust for the Turkish state.

Altan Tan, local MP (personal interview, June, 2011), argued that GAP has not made a significant contribution to the region overall, but instead destroyed the life of the locals:

Locals who have been affected by the GAP project may well have received financial compensation, but these locals went to big cities with big dreams to create new lives but were disappointed and became poorer, because they could not adapt to city life. The only people to benefit in this regard were in fact western Turkish engineers, who earned high salaries, and the Turkish state in terms of hydroelectricity, but the benefits did not extend to the region itself.

So, the research shows that the project, which was going to reform the negative aspects of the region has not yet been seen to do so. As Tan states, GAP did not fulfil its commitment everywhere in the region equally. Professor Ahmet Ozer (personal interview, June, 2011), who has carried out important research on the GAP project and argued that Turkey created GAP because, on the one hand, it could receive tax from the Kurdish region while, on the other hand, it aimed to create integration between the east and west of Turkey, points to this inequality:

The GAP 'social development' programme indicates that the project is geared towards remote areas and infrastructuring cities. However, when we look at it closely, with the exception of Sanliurfa, cities like Siirt have not benefited from the project at all. While there are some signs of development in the cities, these are not apparent in most rural areas or remote villages.

Özer claimed that the GAP project was purely political and argued that the Turkish state fails to acknowledge the distinctive identity and cultural aspects of the region, and he emphasized the inequality between the region and other regions of Turkey:

There is a need to increase the literacy ratio to Turkey's standard. Of course, when we say bring the literacy ratio up to Turkey's standard, we need to respect local culture and identity; otherwise the idea of social sustainability does not make sense and cannot work.

The table below shows 2010 literacy ratios in the GAP Region.

Educational Attainment by Gender

Education situation	Number/%	Women	Men	Total (N=3690) *
Never went to school	Number	981	285	12266
	%	49.7	17	34.7
Primary School	Number	525	634	1159
	%	26.6	27.8	31.7
Secondary School	Number	215	327	542
	%	10.9	19.5	14.8
High School	Number	204	316	520
	%	10.3	18.8	14.2
University	Number	34	97	131
	%	1.7	5.8	3.6
Other	Number	14	20	34
	%	0.7	1.2	0.9
Total	Number	1973	1679	3652
	%	100	100	100

P<0.05

* 38 unknown

Can Suyu: GAP 2010⁸⁸

Although I am not analyzing the region's literacy situation in detail, the above tables themselves provide evidence that GAP has failed to advance the region not only in social and economic terms but also in terms of literacy. According to the GAP-Master Plan,⁸⁹ the level of education, especially for girls, is demonstrably low, and so far

⁸⁸ See GAP, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma Başkanlığı, Bölgesel Kalkınmanın Can Suyu: GAP, Karsılastırmalı Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapı Arastırması, T.C. Basbakanlık GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı ve sosyoloji Dernegi, 2010, Ankara.

⁸⁹ TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP (1989), *GAP Master Planı*, www.gap.gov.tr/site.../gap_master_plani

GAP has failed in its stated aims to ensure equal educational opportunities in all sections of the population, promote literacy, support vocational and technical training, and raise the social and educational profile of women, who remain marginalized.

Research (Can Suyu: GAP 2010; USİAD 2008) indicates the following, based on 3,690 people: 1,266 people never went to school, while the female illiteracy ratio is 49.7% and the male illiteracy ratio is 17%. It indicates that 26.6% of women and 27.8% of men went to primary school. For secondary school, this number decreases; for women, attendance is 10.9% whereas men's attendance is 19.5%. In high school and university, literacy ratios for both women and men are decreasing, though men's literacy ratio is higher. Despite the fact that in big cities there are some improvements in the ratios, overall they are far behind that of the west of Turkey, as is overall improvement in literacy - 30% of men in the region are illiterate, and 45% of women.

Müsvet Çakar (personal interview, June 2011), president of an NGO, the Environmental Ecology and Support Ecology Association (Çevre Ekoloji ve Yasatma Destekleme Dernegini), declares that the state authorities or institutions do not tell the truth about the region: "We know that this city, Mardin, is the fourth from the bottom in Turkey related to literacy; but when you ask the government office in charge of literacy, they tell you that the city's literacy has been increased to 20%, which is not true."

Çakar also points out that when you examine GAP official documents they show the region benefitting substantially from the project in terms of socio-economic development. However, the independent surveys do not reflect what the government claims. He indicates that while a small group of people in the region get economic benefits from the project, the positive economic outcome does not extend to all the inhabitants, who are mainly peasants. According to Çakar:

GAP serves a certain and specific group of people.⁹⁰ External individuals are involved for their own sake rather than for the interest of the local people and region. The project has in fact created an unequal and unbalanced income for

(accessed 10 February 2011).

⁹⁰ The specific group is mainly considered to be the landlords in the region, who own the majority of the land ("roughly 10% of the population owning 75% of the land, and high degrees of landlessness" (Harris 2002: 749)).

individuals in the region. In fact, it has destroyed many people's lives and created serious displacement.

Mehmet Çelik (personal interview, July 2011), a local textile businessman from Samsat town, which is one of the oldest in the region, stated that GAP did not create job opportunities for the local people, and that many young people are unemployed. The priority of the Turkish state has been to complete the Atatürk Dam in the town, Çelik argued, but the state did not consider the young people's future. He alleged that they now have to go to farm elsewhere every April. They are still seasonal peasants and GAP has worsened their economic conditions:

Before Samsat was flooded by the Atatürk Dam, the people of Samsat town had the opportunity to raise livestock because they had enough land; but now we are left with nothing but to leave our homes for job opportunities in the big cities of Turkey. So, the majority of local people are seasonal peasants. They, the locals, go to other parts of the country to find seasonal work and when the work is finished, they wait more than six to eight months for work to resume.

According to Çelik, at present 80% of people from Samsat are working in other parts of the country. People have to send their children to their grandmothers and fathers, in order to find seasonal jobs far away. This was not the situation in the old Samsat, where people never had to leave their families to find jobs. Çelik explained: "The idea of modernising the region destroyed the ordinary lives that we used to have in a peaceful community, where we all cared for each other." He also claimed that they did not get fair value for their lands. The lands they lost were a more valuable and sustainable source of income than the sum of money they got in return: "When we first received compensation in cash, it seemed like a lot of money. But now, when we think of our fertile land, the compensation we have received was nothing". He continued:

Supposing you gave 20 milyar (billion) Turkish Lira to a very young person, this person would not know what to do with the money, because he would not have enough knowledge about how to handle such a large sum of cash. So, we were put in that situation!

Locals did not have a chance to rationally consider what was in their best interests for their future. Thus, when the Turkish state came up with the proposal to develop the region via the GAP project, many signed and accepted without appreciating what might happen to them. They believed that the state would compensate them appropriately, so they would be able to lead a better life. However, the GAP policy-makers did not offer any information regarding the impact of the project and did not properly acknowledge to the locals the ways in which their lives were going to differ from their experiences of village life.

“We were told that the government would give us agricultural land, tractors and animals for a better life,” said a man from Yenicagla village in Batman city (group interview, June 2011). But unfortunately they learnt much later that the state had undervalued their properties and not compensated them appropriately. So, like many other people in the GAP region, they became victims of the project.

In the same group interview in the newly resettled village of Yenicagla, which was one of ten which had been flooded and relocated when the Batman dam was built, I was told that the government should have given them agricultural land, tractors and animals. But instead, villagers complained that the government had thrown them into an isolated place, where they were surrounded by private landlords, so that they could not move around or keep their own animals. As one of the villagers said: “OK, we have been given a concrete house, but how about our children over 18 who may soon like to have a family? In our village, we could have built a house for them, but now there is no such opportunity.”

When the state forced the locals to leave the houses in their old villages, only married ones were given houses but young single ones were not given accommodation, so many of them had to leave the region in order to find work. Despite the fact that the state built the new village, it did not meet the basic needs of the people. An interviewee called Mustafa Seven stated at the group interview in Yenicagla that there was a contradiction in the GAP policy-makers’ stated aim:

This project was supposed to be a sustainable project, yet despite the fact that the state built a new village, Yenicagla, it did not meet people’s basic needs. Most of this village does not have proper roads and we cannot get fresh water.

There were two issues, which came up during my fieldwork in the region with the people who had been affected by the project. The first was that the majority of the people did not like the new resettlement location. Almost all of my interviewees complained about being isolated, because the new resettlements were too far, not only from the water basin where they had lived all their lives, but also from their original territories. The second issue was that the houses the government provided (known as the Mass Housing Administration (Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı (TOKİ)), organized by the Turkish state) were valued more highly than their original houses, so people had to take out mortgages. These people, who had lost their lands and livelihood, now had to struggle to pay their mortgages; so from this point of view, the state rather than the local people benefitted from the project. Mesut, a resistant of Hasankeyf, pointed out:

TOKİ sells state houses and, if you want to buy one of these newly built blocks, you must borrow money from the state bank, 'Halk Bankası'. The flats that TOKİ sell are 70,000 Turkish Lira but the state compensates us 40,000 Lira for our houses. So, the state makes good business from us.

Hence, the majority of the locals preferred to live in the city or rural areas through their own initiatives. Firat, from Hasankeyf town (personal interview, June, 2011), indicated that the word 'modern' for the state meant concrete buildings that were built by the state, and which were like being in a modern cage. While they had opportunities to produce their own needs in their villages, living in these modern buildings forced them to buy all their needs. Firat declared: "This is what the state means by modernization!" A participant from Ilisu valley (June 2011) said:

First, all villagers were in favour of the dam. We thought that the state would help us to create a new and good life style, provide new roads and end poverty as well as create work for us. But as you can see, all we have now is some concrete buildings that cannot give us anything and only take from us!

The above statements indicate that many locals have not been satisfied with the project. According to an NGO staff member from the Keep Hasankeyf Alive Initiative Activists (Hasankeyfi yaşatma girişiminde activist), Serhat Öz (personal interview,

June, 2011), where the water was transferred, the GAP project worked for landlords not for ordinary people, who did not have land. The uneven land distribution situation has been one of the most serious issues which the state has been unable to resolve. The highly hierarchical clan structured system in the region, whereby the clan owns the majority of the land, has benefitted from GAP. Thus, in this respect Öz argued that he did not believe that GAP would reach its social development goal.

Ömer Faruk Paköz, chairman of Keep Hasankeyf and Tigris Dicle River Life Association (Hasankeyf ve Dicle Nehri Yaşatma Derneği başkanı) (personal interview, June 2011), outlined how the Turkish government, instead of focusing on modernizing the agricultural sectors, concentrates on expanding hydroelectric sectors. In addition, he pointed out there were many companies in the region which have mainly come from the west of Turkey, and which were making money instead of the locals.

Sebaha Tuncel, independent MP in Istanbul (personal interview, June, 2011), indicated that the project had destroyed many people's hopes, people who been waiting for years for GAP to bring prosperity to their region. She commented, "of course some locals have benefitted, but if we think of GAP as a regional development project, it has been a disappointing development for many."

Issues relating to the sustainability of the 'social development' project became clearer when I interviewed the assistant to the mayor of Surici/Diyarbakir, Gülbahar Ölmek⁹¹ (personal interview, July, 2011). She stated that every day 20 to 30 people, mainly women, would come to the town hall asking for bread:

The state promised to develop our region with the GAP project, but up to now it has only produced electricity on our land and transferred it to the west of Turkey for its industrialization. And now our people are in need of bread; the poverty which GAP was supposed to decrease, has increased. [...] If the project had really been intended to develop the region, wouldn't the benefits to the whole region be obvious by now? This is not a sustainable project but a false hope or dream that has been offered.

⁹¹ I wanted to interview Gülbahar Ölmek because I was informed that she was highly knowledgeable about the GAP project, and her statement regarding the GAP proposal was significant not only because of her knowledge of agricultural engineering but also because of her proximity to the mayor.

From this point of view, the GAP project reminds us of the work of Post-Developmentalist, Eduardo Galeano (1997), who has critically observed work on development in Third World countries by industrialized Western countries. He claimed that “[t]he Third World will become like the First World – rich, cultivated and happy if it behaves and does what it is told, without saying anything or complaining” (Eduardo Galeano 1997: 214). However, these countries and their people have listened and made a conscious effort to hear good news for years, but it has never arrived. Should we see the GAP ‘social development’ project in this framework? The idea that GAP would modernize the region and would bring higher living standards has failed to convince the locals.

Nedim Tüzün (personal interview, July 2011), chairman of the electrical engineering committee in Diyarbakir (Diyarbakır şubesinin enerji komisyonu başkanlığını), approaches the project critically. Despite the fact that GAP has been introduced as a multi-sector regional development project based on the concept of sustainable development for the south-east region, he did not see it as a viable proposition but rather as an unsustainable development project. He too pointed out that the south-east continued to be one of the least developed areas in Turkey, “While there has been significant development in hydroelectric production, in the irrigation sector, this has not taken place. Therefore, the concept of multi-sector integrated regional development project based on the idea of sustainability has not been successful.”

When the first GAP Social Action Plan was not successful in creating a springboard for social and human development activities and integration at the local, national and international levels, in 2008 the Turkish policy makers launched another GAP Action Plan to remedy the economic and social shortcomings of the former plan.⁹² This time the targets were to compensate for the shortcomings and failure of the past project and were to be completed by 2012.

When former prime minister Recep T. Erdoğan presented the GAP Action Plan in 2008, he claimed that “factors such as resource limitations, economic crises, terrorist activities striking the region and the unstable environment reigning in the Gulf Area as well as some technical defects kept this project behind the desired level

⁹² GAP Action Plan Investigation and Assessment Report (Gap Eylem Planı İnceleme ve Değerlendirme Raporu) 2008-2012, in TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı (2008), *GAP Nedir*, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 6 May 2015).

of success” (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 22 March 2013).

The 2008 plan was “designed and set forth in the context of the GAP Project, aiming mainly at irrigation, and covering basic infrastructure needs and accelerating economic development and social progress in the region” (Ibid). However, although Erdogan stated that the project would be completed in four to five years, he did not specify any concrete social-economic plan and budget sources. He said:

Our basic objective in the GAP Action Plan is to ensure economic growth, social development and employment creation in the south-east so as to enhance the level of welfare, peace and happiness of our citizens living in the region. In line with our determination to fully complete the project, the focus is on meeting basic infrastructure needs including irrigation in the first place and accelerating economic and social development in the region. With a productive economy and new social capital that it will unleash in the region, the GAP Action Plan will also contribute to nationwide targets of economic growth and development and social stability.

However, Nedim Tüzün (personal interview, July 2011) stated in the context of the 2008 Action Plan that the project did not go forwards but backwards. Development of the energy sector has increased, but irrigation and the overall GAP ‘social development’ programme, which had been promised to the region’s inhabitants for years by Turkish governments, has not reached its targets. Prime Minister Erdogan’s statement has not made much difference, as the previous leaders of Turkey also visited the region and promised that they would complete GAP’s social programmes.

Therefore questions arise as to why the GAP ‘social development’ project has not yet been completed, and why it still exists on GAP official documents, despite its ineffectiveness. The evidence indicates that Turkey has no intention of giving it up. Arguably, this is because it is state policy and because Turkey gets almost 50% of its electricity from the project. The state has focused on technical issues, neglecting the ‘social development’ programme, ignoring the potential benefits to local people and doing nothing to ensure its sustainability. The development of the energy sector has been pursued actively in the region, but this has been used, not on behalf of the

region, but for the west of Turkey's energy needs for industrialization.⁹³ The question arises, therefore, as to whether Turkey has not in reality changed its traditional view of GAP, but continues to regard it purely as a hydroelectric project.

We know that Turkey is desperate for energy production. In order to understand why this is the case, we need to look at the historical background of Turkish energy production for its industrialization as a developing country. Since the end of the First World War, we can see how the Euphrates and Tigris river waters have been significant as the main sources for power generation. Crucially, while overall Turkish energy use went up by 30% in the period 1975 to 1982, it produced only 24% of its energy from its own sources (Kolars 1986). Obviously the situation was getting worse, since the population was increasing. Importing energy was costing the country billions of dollars. During the 1980s, Turkey imported 2.763 million tons of petroleum products and crude oil from Middle Eastern and North African countries. By 1983, Turkey's energy imports from the same region had risen by 40% to 3.873 million tons (Kolars 1986).

It is evident that Turkey anticipates a more significant role for electricity in its energy base. Annual consumption of electricity is approximately 29 billion Kwh and is predicted to increase more than six times to 200 billion Kwh over the next ten years. According to Kolars, in order to import this energy, Turkey has had to borrow huge loans. However, the Turkish "geographical situation has endowed it with rainfall and mountain catchment areas and good hydropower potential" (Ibid: 62). In these circumstances, it is vitally important that Turkey's hydroelectrical resources be developed as swiftly as possible in order for it to supply its own needs. So, hydro-electric development became a crucial aspect of Turkish planning. Thus, based on estimates, domestic hydroelectric potential was assumed to be around 100 billion Kwh, of which 45% was planned to come from the Euphrates River. Turkey knew that if the water resources of the region were fully developed, there would be multiple benefits. Certainly, the first dam, the Keban on the Euphrates, followed by Karakay and later Atatürk dams, were built specifically to cater for increasing Turkish energy demands.

⁹³ See gap eylem planı inceleme ve değerlendirme raporu - emo, www.emo.org.tr/.../d73f5b6b5d8b428_ek.pdf?tipi (*Türk Mühendis Ve Mimar Odaları Birliği* (TMMOB)) Diyarbakir İl Koordinasyon Kurulu [GAP Action Plan and Review Report: criticism and recommendations by Turkey Architecture, Engineering and Coordination Centre, Chamber, Diyarbakir Coordination Board] (accessed 8 June 2015).

In relation to the Turkish energy issue, Kaygusuz (1999) addressed the importance of the south-east region's water potential, and he showed that all Turkish oil reserves were also in the GAP region. So, in terms of energy, the geography of the south-east is crucial. For instance, in 1995 the Turkish Petroleum Corporation produced 2.6 million tons of crude oil from the region. Nevertheless, hydroelectricity, is the most effective option because of the zero emissions involved. More importantly, it is a domestic energy source, which gives Turkey huge benefits. Debatably, its rich natural resources, particularly in terms of energy potential, made the south-east the most attractive region for Turkish policy-makers.

Since the 1980s, the Turkish economy was transformed into a neo-liberal model, which led it towards robust positive socio-economic development. By the 1990s, Turkey became increasingly involved in international trade, focused on global rather than domestic markets, invested in long term market relations strategies, and geared towards technological developments and strategic planning for production and investment. "As a result, in the last decade, we have seen the increasing importance of the discourse of the 'free market', the multiplication and the dissemination of economic actors, and the pluralization of economic organizations in Turkish society" (Keyman 2005: 110-11).

There is no doubt that Turkey, which has enjoyed rapid economic growth since the 1980s, appears to be or preparing to be one of the main actors in Middle Eastern geo-politics. For instance, Turkey is now not only the world's 16th largest economy, but expected to be among the world's ten leading economic states by 2023. In order to increase its economy further, energy is the most important factor for Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey wants to take its place in the European Union (EU) and "applied for membership of the European Economic Community (EEC) in April 1987 as the ultimate step in Turkey's search for 'recognition' as part of the 'European family'" (Aral 2001). In December 2002, in Copenhagen, the European leaders set out plans for negotiations with Turkey over its accession. The Copenhagen Council established that if Turkey fulfilled the Copenhagen political criteria, there would be no delay in negotiations for accession into the EU (Lejour and de Mooij 2005).

Turkey knows that the EU is mainly about economic and market expansion, and countries such as Turkey have a potentially key role to play in European Union expansion. For instance, Istanbul is a key centre for the Middle East, North Africa, the Balkans and, most importantly, the Black Sea region (Ergener, 2002: 120-1). Turkey

is located in an important strategic region, which would enable greater access to the economies of Asia. Moreover, as Gunter (2007) points out, Turkey's geostrategic access to the gas and oil supplies of the Middle East and Central Asia would make it invaluable for the EU's future energy needs as well as providing alternative energy routes to Europe. Thus, since the signing in 1963 of the Association Agreement with the European Economic Community (EEC), there has been a growing interest among European decision makers in greater economic integration with Turkey (Gunay and Karatekelioglu 2005). So, once Turkey is in the EU, with the large and growing Turkish population, expected to be the largest in the EU by 2020, it would obtain a vital role in EU decision-making, and, with its current and rapidly growing economy, would become one of the most powerful states in the region.

However, to be in such a position Turkey knows that it is desperate for energy generation to meet its growing needs. Therefore, utilizing the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for power production represented treasure which could not be neglected by Turkish policy-makers. As the president of GAP, Sadrettin Karahocagil, stated, despite the fact that the Turkish state could not guarantee that all social programmes would be offered, he stressed that the state would complete all dams for future power production.

For instance, dams such as the Karakaya Dam and Atatürk Dam, and soon the Illisu Dam, will be major energy providers for GAP. The Karakaya Dam, completed by 1988, is the second most important dam on the Euphrates River. The total install capacity of the dam is 1,800 MW and its power generation is 7,354 GWh annually (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 22 May 2014). The Karakaya Dam was given the go-ahead before the establishment of the GAP project, and was built for energy production only. The Karakaya Dam could not benefit the region's development in terms of irrigation, but it provides energy production for the whole country via an interconnected system.

The Atatürk Dam is considered to be the fifth largest dam in the world after Syncrude Tailings Dam Mildred MLSB and Syncrude Tailings Dam Mildred SWSS in Canada, Tarbela Dam in Pakistan and Port Peck Dam in the United States. This ambitious project is one of the largest in GAP, as Klot (1994: 126) puts it, the 'Jewel in the Crown', its main purpose being irrigation and electricity production in the GAP region. The dam's power production capacity is 2,450 MW and is the largest of a series of 19 power plants belonging to GAP. It produces 8,900 GWh power annually.

The Ilisu Dam, Turkey's latest \$1.5 billion (US) project, one of the largest after the Atatürk Dam, is located on the Tigris River. The Ilisu Dam is only considered to be a hydro-power project, has the capacity of a 1,200MW power station, and is expected to produce 3,800 GWh of hydroelectric power annually (Bosshard 1998). The dam is expected to produce 3.2% of total (42,359 MW) Turkish energy. Writers such as Aydin (2000: 9) state that the Ilisu Dam as an energy project is "vitally important to Turkey in its struggle to become a modern economy in a responsibly short period of time." So the Turkish state's determination to complete the Ilisu Dam and all the other dams is mainly because of its energy requirements.

The table below shows 19 hydroelectric power plants which are part of the GAP project and their current status. Once the project is fully completed, these plants will supply the majority of Turkey's energy on the basis of anticipated nationwide power consumption, and it is believed to be one of the biggest hydroelectric power projects in the world.

Hydroelectric Power Plants (HEPPs)

Name	Inst Capacity (MW)	Energy Prod. (GWh/yr)	Status
Karakay Dam & HEPP	1,800	7,354	In operation since 1987
Atatürk Dam & HEPP	2,400	8,776	In operation since 1993
Birecik Dam & HEPP	672	2,516	In operation since 2000
Karkamis Dam & HEPP	180	652	In operation since 1999
Kocali Dam & HEPP	40	120	Master Plan
Sirimtas Dam & HEPP	28	87	Master Plan

Buyukcay Dam & HEPP	30	84	Master Plan
Kahta Dam & HEPP	75	171	Master Plan
Sanliurfa & HEPP	50	124	In operation 2005
Erkenek & HEPP	7	43	In operation 2010
Fatobasa & HEPP	22	47	Master Plan
Euphrates Basin	5,304	19,974	
Kralkizi Dam & HEPP	94	146	In operation since 1998
Dicle Dam & HEPP	110	296	In operation since 1999
Batman Dam & HEPP	198	483	In operation since 2003
Ilisu Dam & HEPP	1,200	3,833	Under construction
Silvan Dam & HEPP	150	623	Master Plan
Kayser Dam & HEPP	90	341	Master Plan
Garzan Dam & HEPP	90	315	Prelim Study
Cizre Dam & HEPP	240	1,208	Programmed
Tigris Basin	2,172	7,245	
Total	7,526	27,343	

DSI General Directory 2011/gap.gov.tr (Accessed 5 May 2011).

As the table indicates, there are eleven HEPPs on the Euphrates River. Six of these are now in operation and five still remain in the Master Plan. The HEPPs completed

on the Euphrates generate 19,465 GWh energy annually with install capacity of 5,109 MW, whereas of the eight HEPPs planned for the Tigris River, only three are in operation. These three are generating 925 GWh annually and the install capacity is 402 MW.

So it is apparent that energy for Turkish national development has been the priority of Turkish policy-makers rather than the socio-economic development of the south-east. As Altinbilek and Tortajada (2012: 195) indicate,

Investments for energy development in the region have more than paid off, since the total value of the energy generated from investments in the GAP region is higher than the total investments into the energy sector in the GAP project.

To be more specific, according to GAP's official website, the project was intended to irrigate 1.8 million hectares of land, but it has so far only achieved 18.7% irrigation, while its hydroelectric power programme (comprising 19 hydroelectric power plants and anticipated to generate over 27 billion GWh of electricity annually) has already achieved over 74% of the country's energy production.⁹⁴

According to Altan Tan, local MP (personal interview, June, 2011), "Turkey is not honest about the GAP social development project. All it does is deceive the people of the region in order to gain its energy needs from the dams." He argued that GAP has been hugely beneficial to the Turkish state in terms of hydro-electrics, but not to the region itself. For Dr Gaye Yilmaz from the University of Bogazici (personal interview, June, 2011):

Turkey is not like fifty years ago. It is developing. Turkey's national income per capita is increasing. While overall poverty in Turkey has fallen, poverty in the east and southeast of Turkey has increased. This is evidence shown recently, when the last government distributed some urgent social aid in Diyarbakir and Tunceli. If the state has not filled the social development gap between the west and east of Turkey by now, it is unbelievable that it will ever do so.

⁹⁴ [www.DSI General Directory 2011/gap.gov.tr](http://www.DSI.GeneralDirectory.2011/gap.gov.tr) (accessed 5 May 2011).

An officially elected head of village, Mahsun Kepti, from Suceken village in Batman province, said:

I personally do not trust that the state will develop the region via GAP. There seem to be many words but no actual work. To me this project is a political project rather than a social development project. If the state was genuine about the modernization of the region, it could build three dams which work for the region - not lots of dams, which are for Turkish interest (personal interview, June 2011).

This research reveals that people of the region do not believe in GAP's socio-economic development, and the idea that GAP will modernize the region and bring higher living standards was not convincing to people. Rather the project has been seen, as Professor Ahmet Özer (personal interview, June 2011) stated, as advantageous for Turkish national interests rather than for the south-east region. This study shows that, despite the fact that the GAP 'social development' project has not yet reached its aim of creating sustainable development in the region, and there is a very little hope that it will do so in the context of ongoing regional political instability, the state continues to claim that the project will bring prosperity to the south-east. However, all we can see is that the state is still prepared to pump money into GAP without concrete positive progress in terms of diminishing the region's poverty.

Ali Carkoglu (personal interview, June 2011), an academic from Sabanci University who has visited the region and carried out work on GAP, stated that all the state cared about was throwing money at the region and hoping to stop people (Kurds, for instance) from asking for their cultural recognition. He concluded:

We went to Mardin maybe 15 years ago now, and in Mardin we met with some administrators working on provisional health matters and asked them what their priorities were. They said their first priority was actually to prevent a huge population increase. I said, 'why is that a problem?' They said there were too many babies around. They basically did not have many health concerns, but rather they saw it as a problem for the region that it had such a

high population. Then, of course, when we started to talk to people on the street, nobody mentioned population growth as one of the problems. This kind of mentality shows how GAP ‘social development’ is actually operating in the policy makers’ interest.

So based on my review of the most relevant literature and also on my empirical data, it is evident that the project has achieved some of its goals, in particular for Turkish energy needs, but the evidence indicates that it has not reached its main target of overcoming the region’s long-historical socio-economic underdevelopment; the region still continues to be the poorest part of Turkey.

One of the participants in the group that I interviewed in Hasankeyf (personal interview, name not given, June 2011) said:

The state has never cared about our region’s socio-economy. We have always been second-class in our own land, as far as the Turkish state is concerned. So, the state does not care what we want and what we think about the project. The state could have easily opened up the city of Hasankeyf for tourism and that would have been more beneficial rather than destroying its historical heritage and our livelihoods.

This section indicates that the living standards of most inhabitants in the GAP region have not increased. The region, according to the GAP policy-makers, was supposed to become open to the outside world and thus attract additional investment. However, the majority of my interviewees held similar views to Müsvet Çakar (personal interview, June 2011), who argued that the project has nothing to do with social development but with degeneration and assimilation: “GAP has not saved its position from being the Turkish state’s hidden political tool in the region as a means of assimilation and it did not become a regional project but a centralized one or ‘top-down’ project.”

Thus, the following section will be analyzing to what extent GAP comprised a new form of Turkish politics, which was implemented from above, as decisions regarding the project were decided centrally in Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, rather than in the south-east.

5.3. GAP: ‘Top-down’ project, strengthening state authority, and hidden politics

My research indicates that when the Turkish policy-makers prepared the GAP Master Plan, they never considered human factors and human contributions. Bureaucrats drew up the project in Ankara and did not discuss the concept with the people in the region. For instance, when I tried to interview the director of the State Water Works (Devlet Su Isleri (DSI)) in Diyarbakir (June 2011) regarding Turkish water policy, he said: “We received a statement from Ankara instructing that no one should give any statement.” This demonstrates the secretive nature of Turkish policy in the region.

Serhat Öz from the Keep Hasankeyf Alive Initiative Activists (Hasankeyfi yaşatma girişiminde activist) (personal interview, June 2011) stressed that the regional development plan should have been discussed with the locals. He indicated that all the politics and policies of the state have to be crystal clear regarding the GAP project: “The state says I know best and I make the decision.” Öz believes that such an idea of modernization/development cannot work and will not be in the interests of the locals, but only for the state. He stated that because GAP has been a state development project and was not discussed with the locals, the majority of the locals have very limited knowledge about the overall ‘social development’ project.

For example, a Turkish government research survey was undertaken in the GAP region in 2004,⁹⁵ and research was carried out in 54 villages by the Agriculturists Association of Turkey and the GAP Regional Development Administration. The research showed that 50.5% of householders reported that they had heard about GAP on television or from other sources. Only 5.7% of the people in the region were aware that GAP was a project for the socio-economic development of the south-east. The majority of people, according to the survey, believed that GAP existed only for irrigation purposes - the Atatürk Dam and the Harran Plain. So they did not have sufficient knowledge of what GAP means and, based on my research, this remains the case.

When I interviewed an officially elected head of the village called Nail Ayberk, from Halfeti in Sanliurfa province (July 2011), one of the most affected towns in the region as thousands of residents had become landless and homeless, he

⁹⁵ GAP, T.C. Basbakanlik GAP Bölge Kalkinma Baskanligi, Bölgesel Kalkinmanin Can Suyu: GAP, Karsilastirmali Sosyal ve Ekonomik Yapi Arastirmasi, T.C. Basbakanlik GAP Bölge Kalkinma Idaresi Baskanligi ve sosyoloji Dernegi, 2010, Ankara.

told me that the majority of them did not have enough information about GAP. He said: “we knew that the state employees were holding meetings with the governor of Halfeti and councillors in the town, but we did not know much of what was going on.”

The group interview as well as individual interviews in Halfeti revealed that the state had not only made all the decisions about the GAP project from above, but also that little attention had been paid to local opinions. In this regard, it is important to note that the GAP project has been created through ‘top-down’ decision making.⁹⁶

However, most Turkish people have not had any real problem accepting such a process, since the decisions were made by the state, and the state has been seen as sacred. The state/military complex in Turkish society and culture has been perceived as a untouchable and sacred actor. It may be the only nation in the world which refers to the state as the ‘Father state’ (Devlet baba) alongside the concept of ‘Motherland’ (Anavatan). So, as I stressed earlier in this research, since the creation of the state, Turkish modernization has been led by the traditional state structure.

However, the south-east region cannot be assessed by the same formulation, because the authority of the state is not widely recognized there. The region is mainly populated by Kurds, whose social base is largely tribal, that is, the political power lies in the hands of local leaders, who control small or large groups or villages. For instance, agriculture, water resources and livestock were secured and maintained by the local leaders (McDowall 1992). Thus, the study shows that Turkey has continued its traditional state structure in the south-east region without reference to the social structure and, most importantly, it has not attempted to open paths to enable the locals to think freely about their own region’s socio-economic development, but instead made the decisions for them, imposing its own social formula on the south-east.

Altan Tan, local MP (personal interview June 2011), outlined how GAP led to the forced migration of the Kurdish population to other big cities, a phenomenon which was considered to be one of the strategies to deal with the Kurdish question in the region:

⁹⁶ ‘Top-down’ decision making is not new in Turkey. It goes back to the very early days of the republic, if we do not consider the Ottoman Empire as a state structure. The ‘top-down’ decision making process undertaken by the Turkish state and bureaucrats was informed by their belief that the ordinary people of Turkey did not have the political maturity to modernize the country, therefore it need be ruled from ‘above’. Obviously, behind the ‘top-down’ process were hidden politics of a state that wanted to make Turkey a ‘civilized’ and ‘advanced’ modern society and strengthen Atatürk’s ideology (see Chapter Two regarding Turkish policy).

As a result of the GAP project and Turkish policy in the Kurdish region, thousands of displaced Kurds became refugees, of whom more than two million moved to the west of Turkey. Migration of many Kurds in the west of Turkey reduced substantially Turkish state elite fear that the Kurds might ask for their independence.

Professor Ahmet Ozer (personal interview, June 2011) stated that, through GAP, the state aimed to assimilate the Kurdish population and disperse them in the name of integration:

The Turkish state policy-makers have always had a thought in their minds as to how to change the demography of the south-east. So, through GAP, the state policy-makers wanted to achieve that result by evacuating many villages, sending the local people to the west of Turkey, by which it hoped to assimilate the Kurds.

The mayor's assistant from Surici/Diyarbakir, Gülbahar Ölmek (personal interview), also asserted that the disappearance of Kurdish villages and towns as a result of the dams suited the Turkish policy makers. It suits policy-makers because it is easier to apply their policy and makes it easier to integrate if not assimilate the Kurds in big cities. As we already know from history, Turkey has attempted to restructure the region's demography for its national security. For instance, "[f]rom 1984 as a result of the armed conflict between the Turkish State and Kurdish guerrillas an estimated over 4,000 villages were destroyed and approximately three million people were forced to flee their homes" (Ronayne 2005: 9-10). In this respect, the GAP project can be perceived as the Turkish state intentionally undertaking a hidden political move by making Kurdish villages disappear and forcing the Kurds to live in big cities, so that assimilation can be effected through "their forced inclusion into mainstream Turkish society and culture" (Ibid: 36).

Professor Ahmet Özer (personal interview, June 2011) believes that one of the hidden purposes of GAP is also to destroy Kurdish civilization in the region: "GAP also could be considered as a disposal of Kurdish civilization in the south-east." For instance, the construction of the dams has already buried many archaeological sites

such as Zeugma, or Belkis (its modern name), and Nevali Çori, and it is clear that the project will vanquish the ancient city of Hasankeyf soon, which will destroy significant cultural heritage. Despite the Turkish Article 63 stating that Turkey should be responsible for protecting the value of culture and natural history, and despite the Turkish state registering Hasankeyf in 1981 “as a first degree protected archaeological site, listing twenty-two monuments or sites of importance” (Morvaridi 2004: 714), at present, the Turkish government ignores the Article and its promises when it comes to dam construction, such as in the case of the Ilisu Dam. Clearly the flooding of historical sites such as Hasankeyf is disastrous not only because of the continuing destruction of the rich endemic species of plants, animals, fish and birds, the profound damage to the environment, ecosystem and human resources, it is also disastrous for local history and the world’s cultural heritage (Warner 2011).

What I grasped through the view of an NGO staff member, Ömer Faruk Paköz, chairman of Keep Hasankeyf and Tigris Dicle River Life Association (Hasankeyf ve Dicle Nehri Yaşatma Derneği başkanı) (personal interview, June 2011), is that Turkey has never been concerned about the historical sites in the region. It is important to note that not all the relevant historical sites are of Turkish origin, most of them were part of ancient Greece or ancient Mesopotamia (which the Kurds believe is their historical heritage): “building huge dams in the region has never been the concern of Turkish policy-makers in terms of destroying cultural heritage,” Paköz said (see more on the negative aspects of GAP in Chapter Six).

Professor Ahmet Ozer thinks that GAP also leads to the empowering of the authority of the state over the resources of Kurdistan: “Turkey wants to control all the Kurdish water reserves.” When I had a chance to interview a group from a village and a family from the town of Hasankeyf (July 2011) on the bank of the Tigris River, one of the interviewees said, “this must be politics - not development. Turkey wants to use the dams on the Tigris River, for instance Ilisu and Cizre dams, for future security.” The Ilisu and Cizre dams are very close together, which reflects the state’s desire to create what would amount to a water border with the aid of the dams on the Tigris. Thus, the dams will not only be used for hydroelectricity and as a strategic tool for blocking the crossroads for the locals and Kurdish guerillas, but also for storing water for future demands, which would be a major problem for the Middle East.

Turkey is now also in the process of completing 11 dams in the provinces of Hakkari and Sirnak close to the Iraqi-Turkish border.⁹⁷ According to the State Hydraulic Works' 2007 report on water, the construction of these dams close to the junction of the Turkish border with Iran and Iraq were for the purpose of border security (www. DSI.gov.tr Accessed 8 March 2011).

Despite the fact that the Turkish government claimed that these 11 dams would also be for hydroelectricity and the transfer of water for the cities and towns, they are not designed for the development of the region's socio-economy but mainly for security purposes. The purpose, my research reveals, is to block PKK militants and to thereby deny them connection with local people (Yeni Ozgur Politika 25 May 2011). When these dams are fully completed, they will fill many caves and valleys which have been used by PKK guerillas, and will deter militants from the Haftanin Camp, which is one of the strongholds of the PKK in the region (*Milliyet* newspaper; *Hurriyet* newspaper 25 May 2011).

When these dams are fully completed, they will also have a negative impact on the Kurds in Turkey and Iraq. There will be a new border made from lakes, which will cut off peoples' contact routes and will destroy many people's livelihoods in the region. As Fırat Argun (personal interview, June 2011), pointed out, the National Security Council made a statement claiming that building the dams was favourable to the Turkish state. So GAP in Turkish politics and policy has not been based only on a single concept but has multiple dimensions encompassing authority, security and energy production.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that GAP has created some positive progress for locals, for instance, in the form of social community centres. I will discuss these in more detail when I assess the positive impacts of GAP in the following chapter. However, the problem arises when such a social activity is used for a particular interest, in this case that of Turkish state policies in the region. For instance, although the idea of Multi-Purpose Community Centres (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri* (CATOM)) sounds holistic and humane, its programmes are offered only in Turkish, not in local languages, though most women cannot speak any Turkish. So, the

⁹⁷ These are: Şırnak-silopi Dam Project, Şırnak Dam Project, Şırnak-Uludere Dam Project, Şırnak-Ballı Dam Project, Şırnak-Kavşaktepe Dam Project, Şırnak-Musatepe Dam Project, Şırnak-Çetintepe Dam Project, Şırnak-Çocuktepe Dam Project, Hakkari-Gölgeliyamaç Dam Project, Hakkari-Beyyurdu Dam Project, Hakkari-Aslandağı Dam Project.

perspective of the local people is that the CATOMs draw disadvantaged Kurdish women and young girls into development programmes as another way to assimilate the women, who have migrated from villages and have had no choice other than to accept such services. CATOM, as part of social development policy in the region, is regarded as a front for a hidden policy of assimilation.

In this respect, CATOM offers wider scope to Turkish policy-makers. On the one hand, the centres assist in their plan to integrate those poor people who have been affected by the dams project into the Turkish system by providing health care and educating and assisting women and young girls with social programmes which include training courses such as literacy (in Turkish), mother/child health, birth control, general health and so on. On the other hand, CATOMs not only offer such social programmes, they also offer social activities for people who were forced to leave their villages when the clash between the PKK and Turkish army took place. So, from this contextual framework it can be seen that the GAP project has a broader objective within the region.

The concept of the CATOMs was initiated in Ankara, and therefore the people of the region did not trust any claims to regional social development made on their behalf. I have talked to many people on the streets of Diyarbakir and other Kurdish cities in the GAP region and asked them what they made of CATOM. The answer was always the same: "If the state provides something, it must be for the interest of Turkey, not for the locals." So, it seems that there is a large gap between the locals and the state in terms of trust.

The majority of my interviewees perceive the main aim of the CATOMs project to be to ensure that young people are busy and engaged with social activities. My research and observations illustrate that since the 1980s many young Kurds have joined the Kurdish National Liberation Movement or the PKK. In order to crush this new movement, Turkey began to implement a number of strategies. One of these was and is to provide social activities for young people to stop them from joining the Kurdish movement.

I witnessed the fact that the state provides a wide range of social activities, including courses in musical instruments, theatre, dancing and photography. During my visit to a GAP 'Youth House Centre' in Mardin in June 2011, I met some young people who told me that they came here because the government provided for all their needs. However, one participant said,

Many naïve young girls, who migrated from villages, attend these centres but are not aware of Turkish policymakers' aims. The underlying purpose is to draw these young people into different activities, so they can be controlled by the state via these activities.

When I asked one of my participants, Erdal Balsak⁹⁸ (personal interview, June 2011), what he thought about the CATOMs as a member of Derik's municipal staff, he replied,

CATOMs opened in the region during the 1990s to initiate birth control and other health services. We might think this is good, but CATOMs were part of Turkish policy in the region; their main aim was to teach Turkish to those who came from Kurdish villages as the result of resettlement in order to instil them with a Turkish identity.

It is important to register at this point that Turkey has been blocked several times by the EU criteria for accession to the European Community. Turkey has been unsuccessful in negotiating with the European Union over its accession primarily due to its failure to meet the Copenhagen political criteria for membership (Müftüler-Bac 1999: 240-5). A key reason why EU countries were opposed to Turkish accession was the failure to recognize the individual and collective rights of minority groups. In 1993, the Copenhagen summit required a candidate country to have “achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities” (Lejour and de Mooij 2005). Specifically, the European Council outlined the following criteria for EU membership: (i) stable institutions governing democracy; (ii) the rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure; and (iii) the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the principles of political,

⁹⁸ I interviewed Erdal Balsak in Istanbul. He was a member of staff at the Derik Town Hall (in the south-east) and was attending a conference called Mesopotamia Social Form (Mezopotamya Sosyal Formu) on behalf of Derik municipality, as a speaker.

economic and monetary union. (Müftüler-Bac 1999: 241). Thus, Erkin⁹⁹ (personal interview June 2011) said,

The CATOMs were obliged to promote social services, as part of Turkey's obligation to fulfil EU criteria to develop the region. Turkey has made sure of that, by offering such developmental organizations. However, none of the state projects fitted the EU criteria, in particular in terms of human rights.

Nevertheless, during my visit to CATOM in Mardin, I was curious about its teaching methods. "We first teach them Turkish and then begin with courses," remarked a CATOM staff member, Leyla Gün (personal interview, June 2011). In addition, one of my interviewees (June 2011) told me that they asked the governor of Diyarbakir for funding to produce a play. But because the play was based on a theme connected with people who had recently had to migrate to a city, the governor said: "Why don't you do something for children which they can enjoy?" That interviewee commented: "the state will only fund a play, written in Turkish, that focuses on drawing Kurdish children into mainstream society, but not exploring any moral or contemporary issues."

Thus, my research shows that the state policy-makers had not devised or planned a proper social foundation for the locals, and the possibility of GAP fulfilling its stated aim of closing the economic gap between the west and south-east of Turkey via its 'social development' project is very much in doubt. Erkin (personal interview June 2011) argued that there is no sign that GAP would be of any benefit to the south-east,

The Turkish state's approach towards the Euphrates and Tigris rivers is strategic; Turkey wants to build dams for its electric demands and wants to control water for geo-security. Therefore, I do not believe that GAP has been created for the region's people but for security matters.

5.4. Concluding remarks

The chapter reveals that the GAP project, via its 'social development' plan, was

⁹⁹ Erkin is a board member of the Association for Social Change (Sosyal Değişim Derneğinde yönetim kurulu üyesi). He is also a member of the water rights campaign in the south-east.

supposed to create socio-economic integration and aimed to remove the socio-economic development 'gap' between the south-east area and more developed regions in Turkey as well as offer sustainable development for the region, including the creation of employment opportunities and improvement of living standards for local people. However, this chapter indicates that these plans and strategies have not been sufficiently effective. GAP's concept of offering sustainable development is far behind target and may never be realized.

This chapter has attempted to provide evidence as to how GAP fits into the wider policy objectives of the Turkish government. More specifically, by examining the 'social development' element of the project, the chapter analyzed how GAP became politicized, and how it has become a key feature of Turkish policy in relation to multiple aspects of securitization. It is evident that GAP policy-makers have ignored the region's socio-economic development but instead focused on two issues: one being the social centres such as CATOM and GAP Youth House Centre, in order to teach locals Turkish language and culture; and two, hydroelectric power plants and using the dams as forms of internal security.

The critical question, however, is whether the GAP project was really designed for the social development of the region or for matters of security vis-a-vis the Kurdish problem and energy production. In terms of development, the region still continues to be the poorest in Turkey. Despite the fact that Turkey still claims that GAP will bring prosperity to the region, the project has, in fact, been totally ignored by the Turkish authorities in terms of socio-economic development, apart from power production for Turkish industrial needs. The socio-economic objectives for the region have become a fiction.

The following chapter will address the positive and negative impact of the GAP project. The chapter will also compare GAP with the Aswan project in Egypt and analyze the positive and destructive effects of both on people's lives, examining issues related to displacement, historical sites and the environment as well as exploring the core concept of policy-makers' mind-sets on both projects regarding social development.

CHAPTER SIX

The impact of GAP on the south-east region

6.1. Introduction

Through detailed investigation of the GAP ‘social development’ project in the south-east, this research has demonstrated that the project has not fulfilled its promised socio-economic development target. In particular, Chapter Five has shown this by analyzing government and independent data together with my empirical work in the region. It has not succeeded in removing the socio-economic development ‘gap’ between the south-east region and more developed regions in Turkey, nor has it offered a sustainable development programme for the region in relation to employment of opportunities or improvement of living standards there. However, GAP has made some considerable progress, which will be discussed here.

In the light of the above information, this chapter is divided into two sections. Firstly, it focuses on the positive impact of the GAP ‘social development’ project and points to some progress achieved by GAP in the region. Projects such as Multi-Purpose Community Centres (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri (ÇATOM)*), GAP Youth House Centres and Children’s Development Centres are among the practical results of the project. Improvement in land productivity through irrigation and improvement in industrial sectors are also positive outcomes of GAP. The most important positive impact on the area is, without doubt, energy production.

The chapter then focuses on the negative impact of the GAP project. Specifically, the chapter outlines the ways in which the dams have had a huge negative impact on the environment, archaeological sites, historical towns, settlements and cultures, and have created ecological problems in the region. Moreover, the issue of displacement is one of the major problems associated with the project.

In order to ascertain whether other such projects have failed to keep their promises in terms of social development, and have had a negative impact on human life, the environment, cultural heritage and archeological sites, I have examined the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River in Egypt as a comparative study, and the second

part of the chapter discusses this. While the chapter discusses the historical background of the dam, its main aim is to examine the Aswan project in relation to GAP, evaluating GAP and Aswan in an attempt to provide a comparative analysis of the outcomes and impacts of the two projects.

6.2. The positive impact of the GAP project: a path to socio-economic progress

The Multi-Purpose Community Centres (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri* (ÇATOM))¹⁰⁰ constitute a practical result of GAP's 'social development' effort within the framework of the development strategy. These centres have mainly focused on providing services specifically geared towards women and children; in particular, they have been designed to improve the status of girls over the age of 14 and local women, as measured by specific socio-economic development indicators (www.gap.gov 26 May 2011). The services that the project has offered have included "literacy courses, health education, nutritional and housekeeping courses, maternal education, knitting and weaving courses, as well as poly-clinical services" (Carkoglu and Eder 2005: 178-9). Moreover, ÇATOMs have provided social programmes for women who were affected most by poverty, the dams, and the war between the PKK and Turkish security forces.

Views on the function of ÇATOM differ from one interviewee to another. While many of my interviewees, including NGO employees in the region and local residents, claimed that the only advantage of the ÇATOMs has been for the people who work for them rather than for the locals, Leyla Gün (personal interview, July 2011), the representative of ÇATOM in Mardin, argued that ÇATOMs have played a major role in locals' lives and have contributed to the participants' well-being in economic terms. As she outlines:

We have workshops for women on such activities as tailoring, kilim-weaving and handicrafts. Most women sell their handicrafts and make some money for their domestic expenses. For instance, last year we had 21 women attending the course, and they made 25,000 Turkish lira in two and a half months. We

¹⁰⁰ See TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx; GAP ÇATOM, www.gapcatom.org (accessed 2 June 2013).

may think this money is not much, but we know most of their husbands have no jobs, so this money is important for their weekly domestic expenses.

From Leyla Gün's point of view, even if the ÇATOMs have not provided services to everyone, the organization has enabled many disadvantaged women to participate in public life, women who had migrated from villages to the suburbs of cities, who had never had a chance to access the services provided by the state and who had been previously socially and economically neglected.

According to my interviewees, particularly local NGO employees, ÇATOMs were set up in pursuit of the Turkish policy-makers' policies; that is, through such services, they attempt to assimilate the locals by integrating them into the Turkish system and educating them in Turkish, not in their own languages. For example, the disadvantaged Kurdish women and girls who had migrated from small villages did not have any choice but to accept the services of the ÇATOMs. However, the ÇATOMs to some extent represent an opportunity for self-improvement for the region's disadvantaged women and girls, who may otherwise never have had the chance to read or write.

If we look at the 2014 ÇATOM annual report, we can see some significant social improvements that GAP has provided via ÇATOM. For instance, the report indicates that on average more than 15,000 local people, in particular girls and women, participate in ÇATOM programmes per year. According to the report, over 60, 000 people are benefiting from ÇATOM activities and social services. Through ÇATOMs' services and activities, from 1995 to 2014, the government has managed to be in contact with 272,556 people in the region.

During 2014, for example, 76 social programmes were held by ÇATOM and 30,398 people succeeded in completing them. During this period, products made and sold by the local women made 524,096 Turkish lira profit. 440 people who participated in ÇATOM courses subsequently found jobs, and 69 participants established their own businesses. They set up businesses or took jobs in fields such as hairdressing, textiles, nannying, secretarial work and other similar areas of employment.

In 2014, ÇATOMs offered education or social activities to 2,518 people in the region. These social activities include trips, picnics, and visits to concerts and the theatre. Moreover, celebrations of Mother's Day, Teacher's Day and similar national

celebrations have been offered via ÇATOM's services to the local people. ÇATOMs have also offered education in areas such as health, women's rights, product design, legal education and family counselling. These services have aimed to create goodwill based on forming good relations with all participants. Furthermore, ÇATOMs in Midyat and Dargeçit have exerted their influence to obtain funds from international institutions such as the United Nations (UN) for local women who live in rural areas to get basic education in such areas as health, hygiene and schooling.

Moreover, GAP Youth House Centres (*GAP Gençlik Evleri*)¹⁰¹ have also played a role in providing services to many young people. According to GAP Youth House, in 2011 services including provision of support for young people pre-university, and lessons on information technology, writing, reading, English, German, music, theatre and folk dance, all took place in the GAP region, with 9,337 young people benefitting from the project.¹⁰² Moreover, during my visit to one of these centres, in Mardin city, I also witnessed GAP providing similar social activities, from teaching musical instruments to theatre, dancing and photography courses. These activities were welcomed by many young people in the city, according to my interviewees.

"This centre gives us opportunities to learn instruments, understand theatre, learn different kinds of dancing and photography," an employee called Kurt from GAP Youth House in Mardin stated (personal interview, June 2011). Also a group of young people, during my informal interview in the centre, explained that they came to the centre because the GAP Youth House would provide all they needed in terms of social activities.

In order to develop this service, the state has organised actions in various fields and helped these young people to be active members of their communities. GAP staff have a close relationship with organizations such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the European Union had provided a 47 million euros fund for the development of social activities in the region (Adalet H. Akbas (coordinator of the GAP – ÇATOMs), personal interview, June 2011).

¹⁰¹ See GAP-Gençlik evleri in TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 2 June 2013).

¹⁰² See more GAP Gençlik Evleri - STGM, panel.stgm.org.tr/.../gap-genclik-evleri-e-bulten.pdf (accessed 2 June 2013).

Also, the Turkish state has provided Children's Development Centres in less developed areas such as Adiyaman city and its district Gölbaşı, Batman city, Diyarbakir and its district Silvan, Kilis, Mardin and its district Kızıltepe, Nusaybin and Ömerli, Siirt city, Sanliurfa city and its district Hilvan. As I indicated in Chapter Two, the aim of these centres is to provide social activities for younger children aged from 4 to 6 and 7 to 14. These activities mainly consist of lessons for pre-school education, Turkish language and mathematics, reading and writing, technology and the arts (including cinema and theatre, and folk dance). Children's Development Centres are significant for socially and economically disadvantaged parents who are not in a position to support their children. Since the creation of the centres in 2003, 28,500 children have benefited.¹⁰³

Furthermore, Harran Plain in Sanliurfa province, which used to be dry land unprofitable, with the transferred water from the Atatürk Dam, has offered good productivity in the form of pulses, vegetables and fruit, cereals and cotton (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 5 June 2011). Despite the fact that Harran, and most importantly the entire province of Sanliurfa, has still continued to be one of the poorest area in the country, most people are happy that they have received water for their lands. From irrigation opportunities to improvements in education and health services, GAP has created significant changes here. Thus, if one asks how successful the social development project has been, Harran can be provided as a perfect example. In this regard, when I interviewed Sadrettin Karahocagil (July 2011), the president of GAP, he confidently stated that GAP has now had a substantial result in terms of agricultural productivity, which had fed into the aim of the project, which was to develop socio-economic stability.

There are also some significant improvements in industrial production in the south-east. There are 25 small industry sectors operating in the region, and 1,739 work places, where 73,601 people work; the project has increased the region's added value share to the country's industry from 2% to 4%. There have been some improvements in textile production in the south-east (TUSIAD 2008).¹⁰⁴ In terms of import and export, the region accounts for 3% of the national total, and Gaziantep is

¹⁰³ See more in Milliyet.com.tr (accessed in 6 May 2015).

¹⁰⁴ See more in GAP Raporu - USiAD, www.usiad.net/index.php?option=com...gap-raporu...raporlar...GAP'TA NE OLDU! Bölgede Ekonomik, Stratejik ve Siyasal Gelişmeler (accessed 7 May 2015).

the most active centre of production, accounting for 80% of productivity (Ibid).

GAP overall increased per capita income “from 47% of average national income in 1985 to 55% by 2001” (Altinbilek and Tortajada 2012: 173). In 2001, exports from the GAP region amounted to 708 million dollars (US), but by 2004 this had substantially increased, according to the TUSIAD GAP report (2008), to 1.5 billion dollars. In 2005, this increased to 2.212 billion dollars, and in 2006 to 2.413 billion dollars (TUSIAD 2008). Clearly these statistics indicate significant economic growth in the south-east as a result of the GAP project.

More importantly, at present, GAP provides over 74% of the country’s energy production (DSI General Directory, www.gap.gov.tr (accessed 11 June 2011)), and half of Turkish energy comes from GAP hydroelectric production now. In 2005 alone, “the electricity generated in the region was to the order of 253 billion kWh, equivalent to \$15.1 billion (1 kWh = 6 cents) and accounting for 47.2% or \$1.1 billion of total production at the national level” (Altinbilek and Tortajada 2012: 173). Turkey mainly receives hydroelectric energy from Karakaya, Atatürk, Dilce, Kralkizi Birecik, Karkamis and Batman dams in the GAP Region. At present, Turkey has increased its hydroelectricity output substantially from the project, to 355 billion kWh, equivalent to \$21.3 billion (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 11 June 2011).

During my fieldwork I found that GAP has had a hugely beneficial positive impact for the Turkish state’s hydroelectric production. According to the official GAP website, the 74% energy production referred to above is achieved by 19 hydroelectric power plants, which are anticipated to generate over 27 billion GWh of electricity annually, (Ibid). In short, GAP has had significant positive impact. Irrigation, even though it is limited, has provided some positive economic impact, and, most importantly, energy generation has had a highly significant positive impact for the country’s developing industry. The project has also had a positive regional socio-economic impact, particularly through ÇATOM centres and GAP Youth House Centre.

However, there has been serious criticism that the Turkish state has not focused on irrigation but rather on developments that help the Turkish state integrate, if not assimilate, Kurdish children into mainstream Turkish society through the establishment of Turkish education. In this regard, one of my interviewees (name not given, group interview, June 2011) claimed:

One must ask a question as to why the Turkish state is not teaching the local, Kurdish, language and providing local education, but instead Turkish culture and education. We do not believe this is just social development, but a hidden policy of the Turkish state involved with the project, which wants to control us and assimilate our children via such a project.

I heard this argument many times during my fieldwork in the region. It was mainly coming from politicized Kurds, not from poor people who lived in rural areas. People living in the rural areas are desperate to educate their children in whatever way is available for them. For instance, I witnessed that when politicized Kurds, such as the pro-Kurdish party or PKK, announced that Kurdish children must boycott Turkish schools and not attend for one or two days, this wasn't very successful.

When I asked one of my interviewees (personal interview with a medical doctor, name not given, June 2011) as to why politicized Kurds are so sceptical about the social development centres for children, the answer was thoughtful:

The Turkish state has imposed education in Turkish on Kurdish children. Since the creation of the Turkish republic it has taken Turkish policy-makers a long time to introduce the Turkish education system into the region. For instance, one or two decades ago, almost all Kurdish children would speak Kurdish with their parents, but now this is not the case. The large majority of Kurdish children only speak Turkish at home. Most of these children cannot speak Kurdish at all. For instance, I have four children, none of them understand Kurdish. This is what the Turkish state has wanted to see for ages. So, while many politicized Kurds want to keep the Kurdish language alive, Turkish policy makers, via the GAP social development project such as Children's Development Centres, want every child to get Turkish education to not claim their own language. This is the power struggle which is going on.

Although in Chapter Seven I will provide four issues, three internal and one external, that have got in the way of the GAP 'social development' project being realized, the above interviewee's statement reveals a critical factor in the way the project has become

a political tool, which needs to be further investigated - whether the failure of the project to reach its promised goal is to do with the power struggle between the politicized Kurds and the Turkish policy-makers, who are enforcing Turkish education and Turkish authority in the region.

So has GAP achieved its key aim of revolutionizing the historically backward socio-economy of the south-east? Based on this research, the answer is a simple 'no'. Before investigating what obstacles have got in the way of the project (see Chapter Seven), it is necessary to elaborate on its negative impact.

6.3. The negative impact of the GAP project: inevitable destruction

Despite the fact that not all the dams comprising the GAP project have been fully completed, those that have been are already impacting seriously on the environment, ecology, archaeological sites, historical towns, settlements and cultures in the region. Thus it is of concern to many that the completion of GAP will have further similar negative effects. Based on experience so far, many of my local interviewees, especially NGO employees, think that millions of inhabitants will be the main victims of these developments. These people stand not only to lose their homes, land and means of economic survival, but also risk being affected psychologically, especially as a consequence of the breakdown of their communities and families.

It should be borne in mind that when Turkey first began to draw up the GAP project the policy-makers either did not think of environmental issues or had little knowledge of them, and did not want to take on board the long-term environmental impact on the GAP region. One NGO representative, Ömer Faruk Paköz (chairman of the Association to Keep Hasankeyf and Tigris River Alive (Hasankeyf ve Dicle Nehri Yaşatma Derneği başkanı), personal interview, June 2011), states: "in the Euphrates we used to have a certain kind of turtle, which could only be found here, but as a result of the Atatürk Dam, they have now vanished." He also referred more generally to the fact that since the dams have been built, species of birds and wild animals have been lost, and many other species would soon die out.

Furthermore, local people made the point that, despite the fact that the Euphrates and Tigris rivers receive water from rainfall and mountain streams, the snow on the mountains is the most important resource. In summer, the rivers receive their water from the melted snow on the mountains. But the presence of the dams has

led to changes in the micro-climate which have resulted in reduced snowfall and in the snow no longer staying on the mountains long enough to provide underground water. These changes in the eco-system also affect every aspect of the local inhabitants' lives. The local NGOs' main concern, for instance, was that the changes in the micro-climate would cause environmental damage and produce diseases.

In order to analyze in further detail how the dams have caused damage to the region, it is appropriate to start with those on the Euphrates River, as these have been the most destructive in terms of their impact on the environment, historical sites and human development, after which I will discuss those on the Tigris River. The Keban, Atatürk, Karakaya and Birecik dams have been the most disruptive ones, displacing thousands of residents, forcing them to move from their lands and homes. The construction of the Keban Dam required 25,000 people to be resettled, Karakaya 15,000, the Atatürk 30,000 (Kliot 1994: 125) and the Birecik around 30,000.

Despite the fact that all the dams have had some negative impact on the locals and on historical sites, the impact of the Atatürk Dam has been substantially the worst. When the construction of the Atatürk Dam began, it created serious tension between Turkey and Syria. The Euphrates' water is the most important source of Syria's water for domestic consumption, industry and agriculture. The sharp rise in the Syrian population, which was "34[%] per annum and one of the highest in the world", created a serious problem with regard to the provision of sufficient fresh water for all the country's needs (Schulz 1995: 100). However, Turkey rejects the claims of Syria and Iraq regarding the international "character of these two rivers and only speaks of the rational utilization of trans-boundary waters" (El-Fadel *et al* 2002: 103). Although this study does not focus on trans-boundary water conflicts between Turkey, Syria and Iraq, I suggest that there is a need to re-examine the Turkish policy beyond the GAP 'social development' project and investigate the debate on trans-boundary water conflicts between these three countries in future.

The displacement of over 30,000 people was not the only negative consequence of the completion of the Atatürk Dam. The dam flooded many historical villages and towns, such as Samsat or 'Samosata', which is believed to be the capital of the ancient Commagene kingdom. It drowned archaeological sites such as the

‘Nevali Çori’ site,¹⁰⁵ which is believed to be the one of the oldest settlements of the earliest inhabitants of upper Mesopotamia.

For many years, it was believed that civilization began in Egypt and Sumeria around 3000 B.C. However, in 1993, under the supervision of archeologist Professor Harald Hauptmann from the University of Heidelberg in Germany, the discovery was made that ‘Nevali Çori’ was where the earliest inhabitants lived, during the early Neolithic period. The work of archeologists shows that the economy of villages around Nevali Çori was at the time based on hunting animals such as gazelles and deer, which would later lead to agriculture and farming (Sidharth 1999).

Earlier evidence had revealed that Nevali Çori dates back to at least 7,500 B.C., but more recent excavations show it to have been several centuries older. With its beautiful limestone buildings, sculptures and other artistic features, Nevali Çori represents one of the first civilizations in the world and is “unique in that it represents an already developed civilization with Megalithic elements and meticulous architecture and planning” (Sidharth 1999).

However, the early Neolithic settlements, including the world’s most ancient temples and monumental sculptures, were lost when the Atatürk Dam flooded Nevali Çori. During my visit to Urfa in June 2011, I learned that, together with numerous other sites in the vicinity, this site was now underwater and no longer visible. (Various remains, including the monolith are now on display in the nearby ‘Urfa’ museum.) Like Nevali Çori, historic settlements such as Samsat also vanished under the waters of the Euphrates basin.

Samsat, or ‘Samosata’ in ancient Greek, is an historical town located in the Adiyaman province. It is one of the most ancient towns in the world and was one of the strategic stations used as a crossing point on the river’s east-west trade route.¹⁰⁶ Having flooded historic Samsat with the Atatürk Dam, the Turkish state built a new Samsat beside the new waterline for displaced people from the old town, but they faced major problems such as finding themselves landless. Problems also increased with the confiscation and compensation payments for those who preferred to self-

¹⁰⁵ See <http://nemrutadiyaman.catalogturkey.com/2010/09/28/samsat-adiyaman/>; <http://www.ime.gr/chronos/01/en/intro/nevalicori.html>; <http://www.ancient-wisdom.co.uk/turkeynevali.htm> (accessed 7 May 2015).

¹⁰⁶ See the book published by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2007), *The Ascending Place of Light, GAP Southeast Anatolia Region*; Adiyaman - Coğrafya Dünyası, www.cografya.gen.tr/tr/adiyaman/ (accessed 3 April 2014).

relocate. Many people had problems with the misrepresentation of the value of their old houses. So those families with less compensation moved, mainly to the west of Turkey or the big cities, but could not cope with the new life, and this led to families breaking down and being cut off from their communities (Mehme Çelik, personal interview, July 2011).

What I learnt from Samsat interviewees was that people were not used to having such large amounts of money as they received in compensation and, because most of their lives had been spent in villages and small towns, they did not know how to use it. One of the interviewees said that he knew people who spent their cash on gambling, women and cars. Some put their money in a savings bank, but the Turkish lira inflated and the money became useless, while some invested in the wrong markets. I also learnt that many old people who had to move to big cities in the west of Turkey were now suffering from psychological problems because of their torn community and the difficulty they were having coping with big city life. I heard the same story in other towns and villages which I visited. Mehmet Çelik, a local textile shop owner from newly built Samsat, told me that the state gave some money to the individuals who had to migrate as they lost their land, but these people could not make use of the money efficiently. According to him, they were peasants who did not have any commercial or trading experience and who did not know how to survive in urban areas:

People in Samsat did not have the experience to have the sum of money the state gave as compensation. When the locals received a sum of money as compensation, they did not know what to do with it. Some bought a new car and some put the money under the pillow at home without thinking about the yearly inflation in Turkey, which meant that most of them had their money undervalued.

Çelik stressed that the state did not have any concrete strategy or plan for the future of these displaced people apart from constructing properties for them in the new Samsat: “The state did not tell us how to make use of the money, it built new houses in new Samsat and went off and it left people in these concrete houses but with nothing else.” He said that some local people could not use the money they got efficiently as they were unable to form long term concrete plans as to what to do with it. Although locals had been offered a new area in which to live, they were suffering because of

unemployment and the lack of job opportunities. Thus the demography and routines of the local people had been affected very negatively.

Çelik said that the state authorities did not provide functional support for local people:

When we were in old Samsat, things were better and there were functioning local businesses, which regulated themselves. But when Samsat flooded, we lost all connection with other local businesses. We used to have our vegetable growing area, which we were selling to other part of the region, but now we have to buy from grocery shops.

Çelik also mentioned that inhabitants' lives had been affected by all the various aspects of GAP:

Now, when young people marry, they have to move out of their region due to lack of housing and employment. [...] Due to lack of economic and social opportunities in the region, even those who have lands prefer to sell them and migrate to bigger cities.

After the flooding, only a tiny percentage of local land remained, clearly insufficient to meet the needs of the remaining inhabitants. Çelik commented:

[80%] of the land flooded and, since there is an increase in the population, there is not enough land left to allow us to survive. When we were in the old Samsat, we did not have any problems, but now we have to find jobs elsewhere in the region.

Çelik also indicated that the psychology of elderly people who had to migrate has been affected very badly due to isolation, loneliness and detachment from their own ancestral lands: "Elderly people, who had to move to big cities like Adana, Antep and the west of Turkey either died earlier or suffered psychological problems."

Çelik stated that people's sentimental bonds with their lands had also been destroyed and harmed, an aspect of the social and psychological outcomes of the project. He observed:

Our town is the most affected one compared with other parts of the GAP region. At least 18 villages have been flooded by the Atatürk Dam. Because of the destruction of the flood, we have no story to tell our children regarding the area where we have grown up.

Çelik memorized the past in a nostalgic way, demonstrating how the expelled villagers associate their region before the intervention of GAP with heaven, “to us, old Samsat was paradise.” It is important to note that “according to the legislation in force, compensation for those who want to be resettled by the state has to be kept in a resettlement fund” (www.gap-gov.tr/gap, accessed 22 June 2014).

The Birecik Dam affected 44 settlements and had a serious negative impact on 30,000 people’s lives. When the flooding began, nine villages were destroyed; “impoundment also had its partial effects in 3 more villages and a part of the town of Halfeti. The dam also affected farmlands of 31 more villages while leaving the settlements intact” (www.gap-gov.tr, accessed 22 June 2014). Halfeti is another of the most affected towns in the region, where thousands of residents have been made landless and homeless by the Birecik Dam, which led to the flooding of more than 75% of the town.

Like Samsat, the state has also built a new Halfeti for resettlement, 10 miles away, far from the river. During the group interview in New Halfeti, I asked why the state had chosen this location. I was told that the lands near the river were too expensive and that the state did not want to build anything for them near the water. Although the resettled residents had been in New Halfeti for years now, I was told that they felt as if they were homeless and spent their time in the local coffee shop - waiting for some miracle to happen so they could have their fruitful lands returned to them. Ahmet Gökçek, a local man, (personal interview, July 2011) said: “We used to have gardens, full of all different kinds of fruit and vegetables, but now we have nothing. The state gave some money – that’s all.” He also commented:

The locals who had land and houses have been compensated but I know many that did not have much land but could live in the town. These people, who did not have land or valuable houses, did not receive any compensation.

Abdurrahman Karaman, another local resident (personal interview, July 2011), stated

that the Birecik Dam had deeply affected his life and that he had lost his private farm:

The state did not compensate us, when my farm and land were flooded by the dam; I received compensation, though the state undervalued my property, five whole years later, by which time the money had already lost its value, because of the high inflation in Turkey.

The locally elected head of the village in Halfeti, Nail Ayberk (personal interview July 2011), said:

We were very happy in the old Halfeti. The Birecik Dam took our happiness from us. This is why I speak of the negative impact of the GAP project. I have already said in an interview that, whatever the state were to offer us, it can never compensate us for what we have lost. We used to have our own things that belonged to us but now we have to work for someone else in order to buy bread for our children.

Another resident of Halfeti (no name given, personal interview, July 2011) pointed out that although most people agreed that the GAP project had brought an irrigation system and some level of development to parts of the region, they believed that none of these projects fitted the global environmental criteria. Turkey had never considered the long-term environmental prospects for the region, or how GAP would affect the region's ecology and environment and impact negatively on the ecosystem and natural life in the region.

Furthermore, the 3,000 year old Greco-Roman city of 'Zeugma' disappeared with its valley under the Birecik Dam. Despite the fact that the dam impacted so badly on thousands of people's lives and generated protests from "archeologists and historians, who claim[ed] that it has caused damage to the region's rich archeological heritage" (Sheerhan 2004: 49), the Turkish state proceeded with it and used this strategically engineered project for power production and irrigation.

Another archaeological site destroyed by the construction of the dams is Zeugma. Zeugma is a city of Greco-Roman origin, approximately 3,000 years old, on the bank of the Euphrates. Zeugma (meaning 'bridge') is believed to have been founded by one of Alexander the Great's generals, Seleucia Nicator, and flourished

under later Roman rule. It was one of the most significant cities of the Roman eastern frontier with a garrison of over 6,000 soldiers.¹⁰⁷

Zeugma was important as a crossing point on the river during the period, and was a significant location for trade routes to the east. The city was in the most critically strategic region between west and east. Today most of Zeugma, famous for its mosaics and other artefacts, has been flooded by the Birecik Dam (completed in 2002). Archaeologists such as Pierre Leriche and Catherine Abadie-Reynal discovered a preserved ancient Greek city, the remains of a Roman villa across the river, and, of particular significance, a beautiful Roman mosaic floor (Ibid). The flooding of Zeugma was a tragedy for 30,000 people. They lost their homes and villages, and became refugees in their own country. The flooding caused an international outcry and hit the headlines across the world before the dam was finished (Ibid). Clearly the flooding was disastrous not only for local history but also for the world's cultural heritage (Warner 2011: 95).

While Samsat, Nevali Çori and Zeugma contained vital clues to the history of the region and its cultural heritage, the destruction of the archeological and historical sites by the Tigris Dams is also of great concern. The ancient city of Hasankeyf will soon be buried under the Ilisu Dam. Hasankeyf hosted a number of civilizations and was a capital of many “medieval cultures such as the Artukids, and has links to the Romans, the Artuklu, the Eyyubi, the Safavids and the Ottomans” (Morvaridi 2004: 714). Hasankeyf is a rich treasure of religions and medieval beliefs, both Christian and Islamic. It is well known that the ancient city was captured by Ayyubids (descendants of Saladin, or Selah'edînê Eyubi in Kurdish) in 1232, and it was they who built the mosques that made the town a significant Islamic centre. So the town “is known as the Efes (the Ephesus of the New Testament) of the East” (Warner 2011: 93). Hasankeyf has medieval caves where people used to live, the highest stone bridge of the Middle Ages, an historical palace built by the Ayyubids, and the town is lined with the tombs of many spiritual men (Ibid).

Hasankeyf was strategically positioned to control the trade route from Diyarbakir to Mosul city and the Silk Road. The strategic position and the importance of the town for trade made it coveted by outsiders. At present, it is under attack from its own water and violated by outsiders in the form of GAP policy-makers. In the near

¹⁰⁷ See <http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/horizon/2000/zeugma.shtml>.

future the Ilisu Dam will violate this spectacular ancient city, which the Kurds believe represents the heritage of their ancestors. Sooner or later Hasankeyf will disappear under the waters of the Tigris (Morvaridi 2004; KHRP 21 August 2007).

Hasankeyf is crucial for historians and archaeologists, who have observed that “the reservoirs will flood valuable archaeological sites dating back more than 10,000 years, including all of the town of Hasankeyf, which features a treasure trove of architecture from ancient eras” (Hillstrom and Hillstrom 2003: 138). But when the historical treasure disappears under the reservoir, not only will the mystical associations of the Tigris valley dissolve, but thousands of people will face displacement.

In addition, the reservoir of the Ilisu Dam, like others, is highly likely to infest the region with waterborne diseases, which will then become the concern of health education programmes, but, “[t]he experience with other reservoir projects indicates that such mitigating measures will not protect the affected people from the new waterborne diseases” (Bosshard 1998). Langer (2009: 8) argues that “negative effects of the (...) project fall into four categories: environmental damage, health hazards, consequences for cultural preservation, and domestic politics.” There is also a danger that the reservoir may reduce the natural ability of the Tigris to cleanse itself of waste and city borne wastewater as well as importing waterborne diseases such as malaria. It has been predicted that “[e]ven those that stay behind may find the newly irrigated land unworkable because of salinisation and erosion caused by the dam, or uninhabitable because of diseases such as malaria” (KHRP 21 August 2007).

Despite Turkey’s Article 63 stating that the state should be responsible for protecting the value of culture and natural history, and despite the Turkish state registering Hasankeyf (in 1981) “as a first degree protected archaeological site, listing twenty-two monuments or sites of importance” (Morvaridi 2004: 714), the Turkish government is currently ignoring the Article and its promises when it comes to dam construction, including the Ilisu Dam hydroelectric power project, which also deeply damages the environment, ecosystem and human resources in the region. The dams are continuing to kill the rich endemic species of plants, animals, fish and birds in the region.

It must be stressed that many dams in the region do not meet international standards relating to archaeological preservation. It is clear that the project, for instance, will diminish the mystical associations of the Tigris valley, of which the

10,000 year-old Hasankeyf city is the chief historical treasure, as stressed by Ronayne: “The Ilisu dam on the River Tigris achieved international notoriety from 2000 to 2002 because of the severe economic, social, environmental and cultural impacts it would have, potentially displacing up to 78,000 mostly Kurdish people and destroying significant cultural heritage” (Ronayne 2005: 9). My study demonstrates that in their eagerness to build huge dams in the region, Turkish policy makers have shown no concern for cultural heritage in terms of destroying historical sites, or about creating changes in the eco-system and long-term environmental damage.

Müsvet Çakar (personal interview, June 2011), President of the Environmental Ecology and Ecological Support Association (Çevre Ekoloji ve Yasatma Destekleme Derneğini), stated: “When we consider the GAP programme overall, it has not been for social development but has destroyed the nature of the region.” Çakar argued that the project had not improved the agricultural patterns of the region and also had a negative effect on economic activities: “GAP is not a positive opportunity for the development of the region. In contrast, it has resulted in a great range of negative ecological and environmental impact on the south-east region.” He stated that the project, due to misapplied irrigation, destroys the soil, affecting farming: “The majority of the locals did not have enough knowledge in terms of irrigation, for instance in the Harran Plain. Therefore, a very high percentage of the land has been salinated mainly because of wrong irrigation methods.” He thinks that GAP has negatively affected the main source of income for the inhabitants by harming farming and stockbreeding.

The dams have a negative impact on riparian wildlife; for instance the flood creates physical barriers to fish migration, which obstruct them from reproducing, unsettling the natural balance of the ecosystem and leading to lack of biodiversity. As Ahdieh (1997: 115) argues, “it also floods fertile valleys and creates more man-made boundaries to land open for terrestrial wildlife.” He also points out that with the completion of the GAP project, many historical towns, villages, archaeological sites and cultures will be destroyed through flooding.

The most serious issue was and is displacement, which has been causing disruption and losses in terms of “landlessness, joblessness, homelessness, marginalization, increased morbidity, food insecurity, loss of access to common property and social disarticulation” (Morvaridi 2004: 714). The displacement caused by the dams has not only resulted in loss of livelihoods, but also loss of land rights

and housing, and loss of social networks between the locals. In short, the displacement in south-east Turkey has deeply disrupted and affected the lives of local people, particularly those of women and children, because women and adult children who resided on family land were not entitled to compensation as individuals (Ibid).

Although “Article 46 states that land cannot be taken without giving compensation in cash, and that this must be given in advance” (Altinbilek 2000: 32), “compensation is linked to land rights, meaning that nothing has been arranged for the countless landless” (Warner 2004: 15). For instance, GAP reservoirs such as Atatürk or Karakaya have so far led to the involuntarily displacement of over 100,000 people. Compensation has usually been tied to the property of land or houses. Since most land in South-East Anatolia is concentrated in the hands of large landowners, many landless families were not compensated at all. Instead, they quietly moved to the slums of big cities such as Diyarbakir or Istanbul (Bosshard 1998).

Although displaced inhabitants were promised cash compensation or opted for self-resettlement, the inadequately conceptualized resettlement has resulted in more poverty and social disruption. In short, this research indicates that the negative impact of the GAP project is substantial; the environment and ecology, archaeological sites, historical towns, local people and cultural aspects of the region have been seriously damaged by the large dams.

However, in order to understand whether dams in general have created such a negative impact, the following section will examine the Aswan High Dam project on the Nile River, built by Egypt. Of course there are other dam projects than the Aswan High Dam project which could be considered, for instance, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)¹⁰⁸ in the United States. However, I have decided to make

¹⁰⁸ The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was established in 1933 by President Franklin Roosevelt on the Tennessee River for the purpose of energy and economic development. “The TVA was one of the most high profile products of Roosevelt’s New Deal program which was developed to manage the impacts of the Great Depression, one of the most devastating economic collapses of the twentieth century.” The TVA was not only intended to generate hydropower and economic development but also to achieve flood control and advance navigation by linking to the Ohio-Mississippi River system. Nevertheless, TVA was an ambitious project for improving “agricultural and industrial development programs that transformed the lives of millions of people in the seven states”, and it was hoped that it would be a model “that could be used elsewhere in the USA and, later, in the many parts of the world which similarly had powerful rivers and large populations of poor people”. See “Global Water Forum | The Tennessee Valley Authority: Catchment ... www.globalwaterforum.org/.../international-water-politics-the-tennessee-...20 Mar 2013 and, TVA - Home <https://www.tva.gov>”. (Accessed 20 August 2016). See more: Richard A. Colignon (1997), *Power Plays: Critical Events in the Institutionalism of the Tennessee Valley Authority*; Walter L. Creese (1990), *TVA's Public Planning: The Vision, the Reality*. U. of Tennessee Press (which stresses its utopian goals); Tim Culvahouse, ed. (2007), *The*

comparison with the Aswan dam not only because of its geographical proximity, but also because I want to weaken the focus on the GAP. Nevertheless, I will also compare Aswan with the GAP project, not only in terms of negative and positive impact but also by analyzing the socio-economic aspects of the two projects, and their differences and similarities, including the politics involved.

6.4. What is the Aswan High Dam Project?

It is important to begin with the historical background of the Aswan High Dam, so this section concentrates on the nature and formation of the dam, but to do so we need first to consider the water potential of the Nile River and then focus on the definition of the dam project, bearing in mind that, as defined by Anderson (2000), the Nile is one of the most significant liquid resources (together with oil) in the Middle East.

Physically, economically, socially and particularly geopolitically, the Middle East is dominated by two liquids: both are extracted from specific geological structures and both in different ways are vital to the development of the human society in much of the region. They therefore provide an appropriate link between the physical and the human geography of the Middle East. Water is highly significant as a result of society within the region whereas with oil the major deficiency is outside the region. Both are therefore considered strategic resources (Anderson 2000: 72).

The Nile, unlike the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, “is maintained almost entirely by rainfall from outside the region in Ethiopia and East Africa” (Anderson 2000: 74). The 7,000 km long Nile River, the longest in the world, passes through the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Tanzania, Kenya, Eritrea, Uganda, Ethiopia, Burundi, South Sudan, North Sudan and Egypt *en route* to the Mediterranean Sea.

Nearly 80% of the discharge of the Nile occurs between July and August during the rainy season in the highlands of Ethiopia. This discharge is subject to variation. “Year-to-year variation fluctuates highly and has done so since records

Tennessee Valley Authority: Design and Persuasion. Princeton Architectural Press; Erwin C. Hargrove and Paul H. Conkin, eds. (1983), *TVA Fifty Years of Grass-Roots Bureaucracy*.

were first kept during ancient times” (Monsef, Smith and Darwish 2015). Nearly 85% of this annual discharge comes from Ethiopia, and 15% from the Lake Plateau in Central Africa, which “rises from the White Nile, which is the main source of water to the Nile Valley during the low flow period of the summer” (Abu Zeid 1989: 147). The Nile, in fact, consists initially of two main rivers, the White Nile and the Blue Nile. “The White Nile, from Lake Victoria in Uganda, and the Blue Nile, from Lake Tana in Ethiopia, merge in Sudan to form the Nile” (Nixon 2004: 158).

It is evident that throughout history, the great civilizations have benefitted from the Nile’s water and grown alongside the banks of this impressive river. The survival and religious beliefs of the ancient Egyptians revolved around the inundation, or flooding, of the Nile. Each year the Pharaoh’s high priests would await the appearance of the star Sirius to announce the coming flood season. They believed that the sacred event of the annual inundation was caused by the tears of the mother goddess Isis crying for her murdered husband, the god Osiris. Known as the *sepedet*, this flooding from August to October would restart the Egyptian calendar and bring either abundance or scarcity to the Pharaoh’s people. A year’s worth of crops could be eradicated with a high flood, while drought and famine would plague the years of a low flood. These effects were devastating and weighed heavily upon the pharaoh; therefore, many religious rituals were aimed at appeasing Hapy, the deity of the Nile flood (<http://jpkc.ecnu.edu.cn>, accessed 3 March 2015).

Each year, during the late summer period, the high waters of the Nile River would bring with them natural nutrients and minerals which enriched the fertile soil along the floodplain and the river, and this is what made the Nile valley ideal for farming. This annual pattern alongside the Nile has continued since ancient times, with Egyptian farmers still being highly dependent on the river’s water.

However, with the population of Egypt increasing, and both high and low water at times creating havoc with crops or creating drought and famine, the government decided to build dams, not only to prevent floods but also to store water. In order to control the floods, the government decided to build a dam at a settlement called Aswan (Nixon 2004: 158).

The history of the construction of Aswan goes back to 1899, under the British government, when the first dam on the Nile was built there. The first dam was completed in 1902, but a larger dam was needed in order to avoid floods. Thus, “construction teams raised the height of the dam in a project that lasted from 1907 till

1912, and then again from 1929 through 1933” (Ibid: 158). “Despite these efforts, the flood of 1946 nearly breached the structure. Instead of making the dam even higher, engineers decided to build a new, larger dam upriver” (Ibid: 158), the construction of which began in 1960. This huge rock fill dam, situated to the south of Aswan city in south Egypt and located north of the border between Egypt and Northern Sudan, has become known as the Aswan High Dam. The rising water of the Aswan High Dam created a lake called Lake Nasser in Egypt, named after Gamal Abdel Nasser, president of Egypt from 1956 to 1970, and Lake Nubia in Northern Sudan. The dam, completed in 1970, “stretched 3,600 meters long, 111 meters tall, 980 meters wide at its base and 40 meters wide on top” (Ibid: 158).

The World Bank supported the Aswan High Dam when it “issued a favourable report on the technological and economic feasibility of the concept in 1956 and Egypt hired a British civil engineering firm to design the Aswan High Dam” (Monsef, Smith and Darwish 2015). The government of Egypt also talked of an Anglo-American financing programme.

However, the World Bank drew back from financing the construction of the dam when the United States and Britain cancelled their agreement to start the dam project. It was generally believed that this was because President Nasser recognized Communist China. However, Nasser wanted to develop Egypt’s agriculture, energy production and associated manufacturing, and he was under intense political pressure at the time. The most important issue faced by Egypt was a period of rapid population increase, and a very high percentage of the Egyptian populace relied on agriculture, which was mainly dependent on the waters of the Nile. However, in 1958 the Soviet Union offered to build the Aswan High Dam, and the “project was completed in 1970 and the reservoir reached its operating level in 1976” (Ibid).

The Aswan High Dam was not only constructed in order to prevent the flood but also involved a wider effort “to undertake an ambitious social and economic transformation, guided by principles of economic independence and social welfare, and that was to be achieved through technocratic state planning” (Shokr 2009). In summary, the most significant aspects of the dam appear to be the provision of water for irrigation, controlling floods and hydroelectric power production.

6.4.1. GAP project versus Aswan project: a comparative analysis

Apart from controlling the flood and storing enough water for the requirements of summer cropping, the Aswan High Dam was also built for the economic stability of the Egyptian government during Nasser's presidency. It is evident that the Aswan project has provided significant positive progress, with increased benefits for the region as well as for the country every year (Abu Zeid 1989; Hassan 2007). The following is a brief summary of the project outcomes:

- expansion in rice cultivation
- transfer of about 1 million acres from seasonal to perennial irrigation
- agricultural expansion in 1.2 million acres of new land due to increased water availability
- protection from high floods as in 1964 and 1975, and from low floods and droughts as in 1972, 1979, 1982, 1985, 1986 and 1987
- generation of hydroelectric power
- improvement of navigation and further increases in tourism as a result of the stability of water levels in the Nile's course and navigation canals (Abu Zeid 1989).

So, the \$1 billion dollar (US) Aswan High Dam began to regulate agricultural irrigation systems and produce hydroelectric power, which played a significant role in the Egyptian economy. The project was one of the crucial achievements in meeting the demands for water, energy and irrigation in Egypt (Hassan 2007). If we do not consider the regional economy, the GAP project also generates substantial energy to meet the country's needs. Today, GAP is providing 50% of the country's power production, which provides substantial support to Turkey's developing industry. However, in terms of agricultural irrigation, GAP has not been as beneficial as Aswan for the locals, and almost 80% of the planned irrigation in the GAP area has still not taken place as the water has not yet been transferred.

During my fieldwork in the GAP region, I observed that plans for the canals have been drawn up, but the water has not yet reached many parts of the region. According to Altan Tan, local MP, member of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (*Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi* (BDP)) (personal interview, June 2011): "Turkey is not honest about the GAP social development project. Some of these dams were completed 10 years ago. So, there is water in the dams but no water in the fields." He argued: "There is a completed irrigation job in the Harran area, where the Arabs live, but almost nothing has been carried out in the Kurdish region." One of the male participants from Suruç said:

This is all politics, Even if the state decided to complete the water pipes for irrigating land of Suruç, it is not for social development in the region but to serve Turkish multi-purpose interests, because the land of Suruç is rich and perfect for raising crops, of which Turkey is running out.

In short, while the Aswan High Dam has operated mainly in the interest of the locals, GAP has been enmeshed with Turkish politics regarding the south-east. For instance, the Aswan project also proved to be important for safeguarding the region against droughts, and during the period between 1998 and 2002, provided effective flood protection against high water periods. The floods occurring at this time would have been a catastrophe for the locals if it were not for the dam (Monsef, Smith and Darwish 2015). Moreover,

the Aswan High Dam, when it was built, created Lake Nasser, a lake which has also created a lot more land for people to farm on. This is because a lot of water is stored in the lake, and in turn this water can be used to irrigate land around the lake.¹⁰⁹

The other significant fact is that “Lake Nasser has also created a big fishing industry, which produces 25,000 tonnes of fish a year, the fishing industry is aiming to produce 100,000 tonnes by the year 2000.”¹¹⁰

So the Aswan project has been responsible for: “(1) providing water for agricultural land reclamation (2) converting basin irrigation with perennial irrigation (3) expanding rice production (4) development of a fishery in the reservoir formed by the AHD (5) improvement of river navigation due to steady water level downstream from the AHD” (Ibid). It is clear that the Aswan project has played a role in increasing the region’s economic production, regulating the annual flooding and generating hydroelectricity, which means that the dam has had a significant impact on the economy and culture of Egypt. In the case of the GAP project, only hydroelectric output has been successfully improved, the remaining programmes still being only

¹⁰⁹ See http://www.mbarron.net/Nile/envir_nf.html (accessed 5 March 2015).

¹¹⁰ See http://www.mbarron.net/Nile/envir_nf.html (accessed 5 March 2015).

blueprints.

The Aswan project has been tremendously positive not only for the region's socio-economy but has also played a major role in contributing to the country's overall development. From this point of view, I would argue that GAP and Aswan have some similarities, when we consider how both projects produce energy, playing a significant role in their respective countries' hydroelectric production. However, when we analyze their aims, the two countries differ. While the Aswan project has not been much involved with issues relating to regional politics, such as controlling or integrating locals into mainstream state politics, GAP has been deeply enmeshed with such issues and been constructed to serve Turkish state policies in the region.

6.4.2. Evaluating GAP and Aswan: outcomes and impact

There is no doubt that dam projects such as GAP or the Aswan project have always had some degree of negative impact on human life, the environment, cultural heritage and archeological sites. These projects have not always met international standards relating to archaeological preservation, environmental issues and human life. It seems there is no way to avoid all the problems arising from these projects, but the authorities can ensure that there are more positive than negative consequences. Was this the case for both projects? The answer is that when we evaluate GAP and Aswan, there are not many differences in terms of negative impact on their respective regions.

I have stressed in this chapter that the GAP project has had huge negative impact on many people from the region, who have lost their houses and lands. I learnt about and observed many families torn apart and their communities destroyed. Obviously this has had a huge psychological impact on them. In the case of the Aswan project, there are similar issues in that the dam also displaced thousands of residents, forcing them to move from their lands and homes.

To be more specific, the Aswan High Dam project deeply affected thousands of Nubian lives,¹¹¹ as they were forced to relocate far away from their location. An estimated 90,000 Nubians lost "their ancestral land and their social fabric based on

¹¹¹ "The Nubians, as with all other peoples, do not belong to a 'race'. They consist of populations characterized by distinguishing cultural traditions, with various claims to Old Nubian, Arab, and Balkan ancestry. The survival of the Nubian language, and some particular Nubian social, material, and intangible traditions distinguishes the Nubians from other neighboring groups" (Hassan 2007: 84).

joint ownership of waterwheels and palm trees” (Hassan 2007: 85). Despite the fact that the Egyptian government provided houses, the Nubians “found the houses lacking aesthetically and hastened to decorate them with traditional Nubian motifs” (Ibid: 85).

In short, the Nubians who were forced to move could not sustain their own population, resulting in poverty and a rising death rate, and the resettlement areas were infested with the tsetse fly, with many people being exposed to sleeping sickness.¹¹² My study shows that the state policy-makers never devised or planned a proper social foundation for the people who had been deeply affected by the project.

The main similarity between these two projects has been the fact that both countries’ governments did not seriously consider their negative aspects. The potential advantages of the projects were more important than the potential negative impact. The Nile Valley, like the area flooded by the GAP project, is home to the cradle of civilization, with many claiming that humanity originated in the valley. The hunter-gatherer society and the transition to an agriculturally sustained community were also believed to have come from this valley, including the development of metallurgy and the start of monotheistic religion. The world’s most ancient antiquities have been found here, revealing thousands of years of human progression. However, the Aswan High Dam project has not destroyed as many archeological sites as GAP. During the planning process, the Egyptian government did not consider archaeological treasures in the Nile Valley, most of which were buried under the Aswan project. Despite the fact that UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) played a major role in rescuing ancient Egyptian remnants and saved hundreds of sites, a substantial number of archeological sites and temples were buried under Lake Nasser. The UNESCO team tried to salvage whatever it could; for instance, the temples of Kalabasha, Abu Simbel and Philae were among those to be saved from the flood waters, the Debod Temple was reassembled in Madrid, Spain, while the Roman temple of Dendur now rests in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.¹¹³

Thus my research demonstrates that the GAP and the Aswan High Dam projects have similarities in terms of their negative aspects. However, the projects

¹¹² See <https://courseware.e-education.psu.edu/> (accessed 5 March 2015).

¹¹³ See more detail on assessing the impact of the Aswan High Dam at [...jpkc.ecnu.edu.cn/sy0701/upload/...PDFs/aswandam.pdf](http://jpkc.ecnu.edu.cn/sy0701/upload/...PDFs/aswandam.pdf) (accessed 5 March 2015).

have not offered the same prospects in terms of socio-economic development. The Aswan High Dam project overall has been overwhelmingly positive in this respect. Despite the fact that it has had some negative environmental effects, it has offered a beneficial contribution to Egypt's overall economic development as well as regional agricultural development, whereas GAP has not been a sustainable regional and socio-economic development project.

6.4.3. Concluding remarks

As I indicated in the introduction to this chapter, Chapters Two to Four were mainly intended to assist in understanding the background of the GAP project, not only in terms of its materialization, but also with regard to its promise to overcome the socio-economic underdevelopment of the south-east, and through an overall analysis of the literature regarding the project's social development programmes.

This chapter has outlined the positive and negative impact of the GAP project in the south-east. Despite the fact that GAP has made some positive progress in social services, irrigation, the improvement of industry sectors and energy production, the negative impact has been substantial with regard to environmental issues, ecological problems, the destruction of archaeological sites, historical towns, settlements and cultures in the region.

The chapter has also examined the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River in Egypt, and assessed the Aswan project in terms of a comparative analysis with GAP. The chapter has shown that both projects have played major roles in providing hydroelectric production. However, GAP has not been as beneficial as the Aswan project in terms of agricultural irrigation. Having said that, both projects have had a serious negative impact in their areas, which suggests that such impact on human life, the environment, cultural heritage and archeological sites may be inevitable in relation to projects such as GAP and Aswan, neither of which, on the whole, meet international standards.

However, having arrived at these conclusions, the following chapter will explore the main obstacles resulting in the project being so sluggish or failing to achieve its social development goals.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The obstacles and challenges to successful implementation of GAP

7.1. Introduction

The ninth former president of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel, who played a major role in creating the GAP project, claimed that GAP was of national significance and that its completion was necessary in order to provide vital national resources.¹¹⁴ In 1998, the then prime-minister, Mesut Yilmaz, said “GAP will be completed by 2010”.¹¹⁵ The Turkish National Security Council, at its monthly meeting on 28 May 2003, stated that it had assessed the project and decided that it should be completed (TUSIAD 2008).

Despite the fact that the above statements by Turkish leaders and the state reflected a desire to complete the GAP project, and despite the fact that many Turkish political leaders, including those representing the Turkish state, have expressed the view that GAP has been a bonus for Turkey in terms of securitization of the south-east and the strengthening of state authority in the region,¹¹⁶ my research, as outlined in Chapter Five, has revealed that GAP has not materialized in terms of revolutionizing the region’s socio-economic situation via profitable farming and employment opportunities for the local inhabitants.

Therefore, the question arises as to why the project has not reached its ‘social development’ target in the south-east. This chapter will mainly be concerned with investigating the main obstacles that have prevented the GAP social programme from becoming reality. I suggest three internal and one external development factor that need to be studied in order to comprehend why the project has not reached its ambitious modernization goal. The three internal factors are (1) the rise of the Kurdish national movement in the south-east and in Turkey’s neighbouring states; (2)

¹¹⁴ See Haberleri, *Demirel'den GAP için son çağrı*, www.haber7.com; *Şanlıurfa: 9. Cumhurbaşkanı Demirel'in Şanlıurfa Ziyareti*, www.haberler.com/Haber (accessed 29 August 2015).

¹¹⁵ See www.milliyet.com.tr/1998/06/06/yazar/kulis.html; www.usiad.net/index.php (accessed 29 August 2015).

¹¹⁶ See GAP Raporu - USiAD, www.usiad.net/index.php?option=com...gap-raporu...raporlar; 'GAP, TC'nin en büyük projesi' - Yeni Şafak, www.yenisafak.com/politika (accessed 29 August 2015).

the shifting balance of political power (the rise of the pro-Kurdish political party and the weakening of mainstream Turkish political parties in terms of electoral votes in the region); (3) the failure of Turkish politics to resolve the Kurdish question.

Although I propose these three interrelated internal political factors, I also put this into a larger context which enables more comprehensive understanding of the unfinished nature of the project, by scrutinizing the ‘external’ political development factor, that is, the development of cosmopolitan democracy or cosmopolitanism. This concept has played a unique role in the post-Cold War world order, and EU candidates are forced to respect its criteria. I examine to what extent cosmopolitanism has impacted on Turkish policy regarding the completion of the GAP modernization strategy.

7.2. The rise of the Kurdish national movement in the region

Before assessing to what extent the rise of the Kurdish national movement has played a role in contributing to a sceptical attitude on the part of the Turkish state towards the completion of the ‘social development’ project, I will briefly reiterate the history of the movement.

As I indicated in Chapter Two, after the Kurdish uprisings between 1925 and 1938 had been crushed, Kurdish nationalism was almost vanquished by the mid-1940s. Either the Kurds had been cowed into silence or they had been thoroughly assimilated. The idea of Kurdish nationalism was almost non-existent in the Kurdish region of Turkey, though the Kurdish movement exerted a limited influence under Barzani’s leadership in Iraqi Kurdistan. The only demands for Kurdish rights and socio-economic rights were made by Kurdish students in the big cities of Turkey such as Istanbul and Ankara.¹¹⁷

However, a new Kurdish National Liberation Movement appeared in the region in the late 1970s, the PKK, under Abdullah Öcalan’s leadership. In the beginning, neither the Kurds nor the Turkish state took the PKK seriously. While the Kurds saw the PKK as a student movement, a typical student reaction to the Turkish

¹¹⁷ Kurdish students formed the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East, or Dogu (DDKD), in the 1970s. They were not a serious Kurdish national development movement but mainly focused on the Kurdish region’s socio-economic issues and the need for development. However they were outlawed in 1980, their activities banned and their leaders imprisoned.

state, the Turkish state itself perceived it to be a marginal group who posed no major threat to its national security.¹¹⁸ For example, in 17 August 1984, when the PKK launched its first active attack on the Turkish gendarmerie station in Eruh, a town in the south-east, Prime Minister Turgut Özal told the media that it was nothing to be taken seriously: “three, five rogues’ ingenuity”.¹¹⁹

The above short statement is significant, because it was made during the period when Turkey was drawing up the GAP socio-economic development programme for the south-east, which was considered to be the first serious Turkish socio-economic plan since the creation of the country. However, the PKK “developed [a] broad organizational structure and displayed an enormous capacity to mobilize Kurds both within and without Turkey, especially in Europe” (Hirschler 2001: 146). Despite the fact that the literature (see Chapter Four) contains the notion that the whole idea of the GAP ‘social development’ project was to weaken and control the rise of the Kurdish national movement led by the PKK, the PKK had “become the first political-military organization transcending regional and tribal ties capable of appealing to a wide range of Kurds residing in different parts of the country” (Barkey and Fuller 1997: 61). At the time, according to Barkey and Fuller (Ibid: 60), “[t]he PKK, at one point, was estimated to have some 10,000 well-armed insurgents and could command the loyalty of 50,000 militia and, according to government estimates, 375,000 sympathizers.”

The battle between 100,000 Turkish troops and the PKK, with at least 10,000 guerrillas, turned the region into a war zone.¹²⁰ The Turkish troops, backed up with modern tanks, helicopters and with strong government support from Ankara, found it

¹¹⁸ It should be noted that, just before the 1980 military coup in Turkey, PKK leaders left Turkey, and moved to the Syrian-controlled Beqa’ Valley. In the Beqa’ Valley, in a very short time, many young women and men joined the PKK, where they first trained. The number of the militants had “grown so large there was no longer enough room to train them” (Marcus 1993: 242). The PKK, who were well organized in the Beqa’ Valley camp, turned back to the Turkish Kurdish region and launched their attack on the Turkish state on 15 August 1984. This attack was on the gendarmerie station in Eruh in the province of Siirt, where later the PKK gained strong support from the Kurds. The Kurds in Turkey, who had been greatly intimidated by the authority of the Turkish state for years, were now beginning to take sufficient courage to make socio-economic demands and ask for their cultural rights.

¹¹⁹ See Özal, 26 yıl önce “Üç, beş çapulcu” demişti | Hasan Pulur ...www.milliyet.com.tr/ozal...capulcu.../default.htm; Cumhuriyet-28.11.2010 Günü 9. Sayfa - Cumhuriyet Arşivi, www.cumhuriyetarsivi.com/katalog/192/.../9.xhtml (accessed June 2015).

¹²⁰ Since the war between the Turkish army and PKK militants began, over 40,000 have died and 3,000 villages have been destroyed, and many evacuated by the Turkish authorities in order to cut off locals’ relations with the PKK in the interests of security (Galletti 1999). It is estimated that over 3 million Kurds became refugees on their own soil, of whom more than 2 million moved to the west of Turkey, while thousands migrated to European countries.

impossible to put an end to guerrilla attacks. When the Turkish army came to realize that the PKK had established a strong relationship with the Kurdish people, the army began to terrorise the region in order to put a stop to the people's support for the PKK. Turkey imprisoned thousands of PKK activists and burned thousands of villages in the name of security.

As Hatip Dicle, Kurdish politician and former chairman of the Turkish Human Rights Association office in Diyarbakir said: "The government is losing authority in this region and they are trying to solve the problem with violence" (Marcus 1993: 240). As Marcus put it: "The on-going violence only strengthened Kurdish support for the guerrillas" (Ibid: 240) and increased Kurdish nationalism.

Thus, the whole idea of GAP's social programmes, to ameliorate socio-economic problems and politically stabilise the south-east, slowed down due to the rise of the Kurdish national movement. In this regard, the GAP regional director, Mehmet Acikgöz (personal interview July 2011), indicated to me that political problems in the region made Turkey's work harder in relation to the completion of GAP.

Moreover, Kurdish nationalism also developed in Turkey's neighbouring countries. In particular, with the end of the 1991 Gulf War, the creation of no-fly zones over northern Iraq (Iraqi Kurdistan) by the US and its ally Britain to protect potential victims from Saddam's regime, provided a substantial opportunity to the Kurds there (Finlan 2003: 69).

The invasion of Iraq by the US led coalition provided the Kurds with a unique opportunity to administer their own region, which later gave birth to Kurdish autonomy and prosperity (Stansfield 2003: 121). So the Gulf War was the real foundation of a *de facto* Kurdish state, and this profoundly "affected the Kurdish question, the geopolitical and geostrategic role it plays in the Middle East" (Olson 1992: 485).

What is more, "since 1991, geopolitical realities have promoted a further development of the Iraqi Kurdish situation, which, for the Kurdish leaders, is now dominated by the issue of self-governance" (Stansfield 2003: 12). So, for the first time ever, Kurds have begun to be in a position to secure their rights in world politics; the Kurds now "freely ... determine their political status and [...] pursue their economic, social and cultural development – [which] is a compelling legal concept for

many groups seeking greater autonomy, protection and freedom from a repressive authoritarian regime” (Yildiz 2004: 151).

In this regard, the establishment of an autonomous government in Iraqi Kurdistan “gave hope to Kurds throughout the region, marking a shift in attitudes to the Kurdish question amongst the Kurds themselves and raising the possibility of improving their standing within individual states” (Yildiz 2005: 64). This development in Kurdish fortunes, in particular the accompanying rise in nationalism, posed a substantial threat to Turkish national security. This development was not what Turkey wanted to see either within its border or next to its border.¹²¹

With regard to these political developments, not only in Turkey but also in neighbouring countries, one of the participants (name not given) at my group interview in Hasankeyf, June 2011, stated that the GAP project slowed down, particularly in many parts of the pro-PKK Kurdish area. The group’s general view was that Turkey had changed its mind regarding the social programmes. The prime minister, Recep T. Erdogan, who went to the south-east with 75 of his regional MPs to present a new GAP Action Plan in 2008, admitted that “factors such as resource limitations, economic crises, terrorist activities striking the region and unstable environment reigning in the Gulf Area as well as some technical defects kept this project behind the desired level of success” (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 11 February 2014).

However the situation may have been presented by the prime minister, based on my observation and empirical data, when the Turkish state realized that its original concept of GAP would not be properly realized as a consequence of the unpredictable effects of Kurdish political escalation, it drew back from implementing the social programme and focused on hydroelectric production for Turkish energy needs. It also began to use some of the dams in the GAP project for internal security. For example, 11 dams were completed in Hakkari and Sirnak provinces, close to the Iraqi-Turkish border, with security in mind, both to block the PKK from having relations with the locals and to prevent a possible attack on Turkish military stations in the region. As I

¹²¹ For instance, in 1997, when the rise of the PKK was underway, and it was being developed in what is now Iraqi Kurdistan, raising the possibility of an independent Kurdish region, Turkey attacked it in northern Iraq, and maintained a buffer zone in Iraq on a permanent basis, with almost 8,000 Turkish soldiers, 15 kilometres deep, and “along the entire length of the 330 kilometre frontier between the two countries” (Gresh 1998: 167). This buffer zone was also intended to cut off the PKK’s connection with and entrance from the Syrian-Iraqi borders.

indicated in Chapter Five, the purpose of these 11 dams was to fill many caves and valleys, thus preventing PKK guerillas from using them and deterring militants from the PKK camps in the region.¹²²

So, to conclude this section, it is clear that when the Turkish state (as the result of developments in Kurdish nationalism) became deeply concerned about its internal security, geo-strategic and geo-politics factors, it began to apply rational choice. Therefore, one of the reasons that GAP has not yet achieved its key aims is because of regional political developments which impacted on the 'social development' project. The Turkish state and its policy-makers have mainly been concerned with security issues, while neglecting the interests of GAP and ignoring the importance of the social programmes in the region. However, one cannot encompass the whole condition of GAP within the framework of the above statement; there are other factors which need to be assessed. Hence, the following section will discuss how the rise of a pro-Kurdish political party has also played a role in shifting the balance of political power in the south-east, another factor which had led to the project being neglected.

7.3. The rise of the Pro-Kurdish political party in the south-east: shifting balances in political power

When exploring the question of how the pro-Kurdish political party has played a role in shifting the political power balance in the south-east, thereby shrinking the mainstream Turkish political parties' support for GAP, it is important to begin with a brief historical account of the role of the Kurdish electorate in Turkish politics. As I indicated in Chapter Three, when Turkey made its transition from a single-party to a multi-party system during the 1950s, the Kurds played a major role in electing the Democratic Party in Turkey, and since the victory of the Democratic Party, the Kurds had become important for many mainstream Turkish political parties in the region in terms of delivering votes (McDowall 1985). To generate a huge number of votes in the south-east was much easier for the mainstream Turkish parties at the time, and they would get elected with the assistance of the local tribal leaders (Ibid). So, from the transition from single party to multi-parties until the 1990s, Turkish politicians and the government greatly benefited from the Kurdish voters. Until the 1990s, since

¹²² See www.milliyet.com.tr; www.Hurriyet.com.tr; Yeni Ozgur Politika, (accessed July 2011).

there was no pro-Kurdish party in Turkey, the votes of Kurds were going to Turkish mainstream parties with the help of Kurdish tribes, landlords and religious men or sheikhs.

However, the emergence of the pro-Kurdish political party, the People's Labour Party, or *Halkın Emek Partisi* (HEP), which was established in the 1990s and in 1991 had a successful result in the regional election when it was represented for the first time in the national assembly, has revolutionized the political nature of the south-east. The region used to be in the hands of Kurdish tribes, landlords and sheikhs, socially and economically, with the knowledge of the Turkish state. This state of affairs perfectly suited the mainstream Turkish political parties who used to then receive the electoral votes in the region, but, as the result of the emergence of this pro-Kurdish party, this is no longer the case.

Before examining the impact of the pro-Kurdish party in the region and outlining the ways in which it has become a threat to the mainstream Turkish political parties, and before seeing to what extent its rise has diminished support by other parties for GAP, it is important to examine a few election results in the south-east.

The chart below shows the percentage of votes for the five mainstream Turkish parties at the election in 1987, when all five parties got a considerable number of votes from the region. I have selected the city of Diyarbakir as the sample area on account of its important political position in the region.

Diyarbakir election result, 1987¹²³

Percentage of vote obtained by each political party

- Social Democratic People's Party or *Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Partisi* (SHP) 25%
- Welfare Party or *Refah Partisi* (RF) 24%
- Motherland or *Anavatan Partisi* (ANAP) 22%
- Right Path Party or *Dogru Yol partisi* (DYP) 13%
- Democratic Left Party or *Demokratik Sol Partisi* (DSP) 9%

¹²³ See milletvekili genel seçimleri 1923 - 2011 ri - Türkiye İstatistik, www.tuik.gov.tr/IcerikGetir.do?istab_id=152; www.secim-sonuclari.com/1987; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/.../secim_sorgu.genel_seciml (accessed March 2015).

As the above table shows, all the mainstream political parties received significant numbers of votes from Diyarbakir in 1987. The SHP received more votes than other parties, because most regional sitting MPs were members of that party. However, with the rise of the pro-Kurdish political movement in the 1990s and onwards in Turkish politics, the traditional system began to change within the region. In the 1990s, Kurds in Turkey established their first legal party, the People's Labour Party (HEP). In the 1991 national general election, the HEP made an agreement to join with the SHP. This led to the most successful outcome for the SHP during this period, not only in Diyarbakir but in the region as a whole.¹²⁴

Diyarbakir election result, 1991

- SHP 49%
- RF 12%
- ANAP 13%
- DYP 19%
- DSP 2%

So although the SHP substantially increased its votes in Diyarbakir in the context of its agreement with the HEP, other mainstream Turkish political parties, though weakened, continued to exist in the south-east. Nevertheless, the Kurdish political movement, through integration into the SHP, managed to win 16 seats in the Turkish parliament (Bruinessen 1996). However, when Leyla Zana and Hatip Dicle took their vows in Kurdish as well as in Turkish in parliament, the Kurdish MPs were forced to leave the SHP as the result of the ensuing political pressure. The HEP MPs created their own group in parliament. This was the first time in Turkey's history that there were Kurdish MPs represented in parliament, taking their places as new actors in Turkish politics. So, "the HEP managed to play a prominent part in Turkish politics for several years" (Watts 1999: 631-2) and gained a significant level of success in the

¹²⁴See milletvekili genel seçimleri 1923 - 2011 ri - Türkiye İstatistik, www.tuik.gov.tr/IcerikGetir.do?istab_id=152; or www.secim-sonuclari.com/1987; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/.../secim_sorgu.genel_seciml (accessed March 2015).

south-east. This created confusion and a new threat for the other Turkish parties and the Turkish state, despite the fact that this group of MPs could not openly declare themselves to be a Kurdish party for legal reasons, since the Turkish courts would not permit it.

Nevertheless, the conventional Turkish political parties were deeply concerned that if Kurdish nationalism awoke, they may lose their traditional role in the region. When the Kurdish MPs began openly talking about basic Kurdish rights and Turkish state policy in the south-east,¹²⁵ all the mainstream Turkish parties supported the state in its efforts to overcome the notion of Kurdishness in the region. The group of Kurdish MPs faced frequent pressure from the Turkish authorities and political parties. In 1993, the HEP was closed down and outlawed by the Turkish High Security Court, and its MPs, Leyal Zana, Hatip Dicle, Orhan Dogan, Ahmet Turk, Sirri Sakik and Mahmut Alinak, were imprisoned by the State Security Courts for a decade.¹²⁶

In addition, many pro-Kurdish politicians were targeted, and Kurdish writers, such as activist Musa Anter, were killed; Vedat Aydin, a lawyer and human rights activist in Diyarbakir who became the HEP's provincial chairperson, was assassinated in 1991, and the Kurdish party deputy for Mardin province, Mehmet Sincar, was assassinated in September 1993 (Bruinessen 1996). However, pro-Kurdish activists and voters did not give up their movement in the region. This was not welcomed by the Turkish mainstream parties because it meant they were losing their hegemonic position there. As Watts puts it; “As one layer of pro-Kurdish leadership was removed from active political participation, others rose to take its place. When the Constitutional Court closed one pro-Kurdish party, pro-Kurdish activists opened another” (1999: 640).

Despite the fact that there was a brief period of relief for the mainstream Turkish parties when the court closed down the first Kurdish party, pro-Kurdish party members created the People's Democracy Party or *Halkin Demokrasi Partisi* (HADEP) in 1994. The Kurdish political movement participated in Turkish general

¹²⁵ See 1990'larda Kürt siyasi hareketi | Al Jazeera Türk – Ortadoğu, www.aljazeera.com.tr/.../1990larda-kurt-siyasi-hareket; CHP-Kürt siyasi hareketi diyalektiği – Cengiz Çandar, www.Hurriyet.com.tr/yazarlar/16360124.asp (accessed April 2015).

¹²⁶ See Human rights of parliamentarians - Inter-Parliamentary Union, www.ipu.org/hr-e/158/mission.htm; *Hürriyet, Turkey - High Court upholds verdict against DEP MPs*, www.Hurriyetdailynews.com/high-court-upholds-verdict-against-dep-mp (accessed April 2015).

elections in the form of HADEP in 1995 and 1999. Although it only received a 4% vote across Turkey, in the Kurdish region it received substantial numbers of votes in both elections.¹²⁷ Again, if we take Diyarbakir city as our example, all the popular Turkish mainstream parties lost votes and HADEP received the most.

Diyarbakir election result, 1995¹²⁸

- HADEP 46%
- SHP 1%
- RF 18%
- ANAP 13%
- DYP 10%
- DSP 2%

As the table above shows, the SHP, which used to get the highest electoral vote in the south-east, and other parties, in particular ANAP and DYP, all lost substantial numbers of votes. In 1999, the situation for HADEP got even better, when we assess the overall number of votes received in the region.

Diyarbakir election result, 1999¹²⁹

- HADEP 46%
- CHP 3%
- FP 14%
- ANAP 11%

¹²⁷ See milletvekili genel seçimleri 1923 - 2011 ri - Türkiye İstatistik, www.tuik.gov.tr/IcerikGetir.do?istab_id=152; www.secim-sonuclari.com/1987; Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Milletvekili Genel Seçimleri, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/.../secim_sorgu.genel_seciml (accessed April 2015).

¹²⁸ Seçim 1995 - Genel Seçim Sonuçları - Habertürk, www.haberturk.com/secim1995; 1995 Yılı Seçim Sonuçları - Seçim Sonuçları, www.secim-sonuclari.com/1995 (accessed April 2015).

¹²⁹ See Diyarbakır - 1999 Yılı Seçim Sonuçları - Seçim Sonuçları, www.secim-sonuclari.com/1999/diyarbakir; Yerel Secim.com-Diyarbakır Seçim Sonuçları, Milletvekilleri, www.yerelsecim.com/Detays.asp?ID=21&SY=1999 (accessed April 2015).

- DYP 11%
- DSP 5%

Note: The SHP joined the Republican People's Party, or Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP), and RF members joined the Virtue Party (FP).

HADEP received a considerably higher level of votes from the region than other parties,

Despite the fact that due to the 10% nation-wide vote threshold for Parliamentary representation impedes any HADEP... representative to win a seat in the Parliament and thus forms a disincentive to vote for these parties, people in the region chose to vote for them most likely as a sign of distinct political identity. (Carkoglu and Eder 2005)

However, when the Turkish Constitutional Court closed HADEP down in 1997, with Turkish police later entering HADEP headquarters and arresting its administrators, pro-Kurdish political activists had already formed the Democratic People's Party or *Demokratik Halk Partisi* (DEHAP).¹³⁰ It is worth analyzing the table below:

General Election, 2002

GAP Region Provinces	AKP	CHP	DYP	MHP	GP	DEHAP	ANAP	SP	Other parties
ADIYAMAN	41.3	13.4	9.7	4.8	2.1	11.9	5.3	5.4	6
DİYARBAKIR	15.9	5.9	7.2	1.5	1.7	56.2	4.0	2.3	5.1
GAZİANTEP	40.0	19.2	6.4	6.9	7.2	8.0	4.4	2.2	5.9
MARDİN	15.4	11.6	8.2	2.8	1.5	39.6	8.8	1.6	10.6
SİİRT	17.5	8.9	4.8	7.1	1.1	32.2	9.9	1.7	16.8
ŞANLIURFA	22.9	9.9	16.3	8.0	1.7	19.4	10.1	4.6	7.1

¹³⁰ See Hızla yükselen Kürt oyları ne zaman kırıldı - Gündem - T24, t24.com.tr/hizla-yukselen-kurt-oylari-ne-zaman-kiri (accessed 28 April 2015).

BATMAN	20.6	6.9	9.6	2.0	0.8	47.2	7.5	3.4	2.2
ŞIRNAK	14.1	4.7	5.2	2.9	1.3	45.9	11.3	0.4	14.3
KİLİS	36.4	6.5	15.2	10.0	2.1	2.3	2.2	3.6	21.8
<i>TURKEY</i>	34.3	19.4	9.5	8.3	7.2	6.2	5.1	2.5	7.4

Carkoglu and Eder 2005

As the above table indicates, the Justice and Development Party, or *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* (AKP), which had become one of the most popular parties in Turkish politics, received a noticeably lower vote in the GAP region, though it received a high proportion of the national vote.

Other centrist parties of the left and right as well as the Nationalist Action Party or *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP) and in most provinces the old-generation pro-Islamist Felicity Party or *Saadet Partisi* (SP), have all received lower support in the region than their nation-wide averages. (Ibid)

DEHAP was the party to receive the highest number of votes from the region. “Only in Kilis and Adıyaman the centrist parties could perform better than their national averages” (Ibid 2005). As Carkoglu and Eder point out, “from the perspective of the distribution of party preferences across [the] region’s provinces we see that there is a very distinct support for the ethnic Kurdish DEHAP that continues from 1999” (Ibid).

Despite the fact that “President Turgut Özal had broken years of state silence by claiming he was part Kurdish, and even more conservative centre-right statesmen, such as Süleyman Demirel, had acknowledged a ‘Kurdish reality’” (Watts 1999: 649), their electoral votes did not increase, and gradually they disappeared from the region. Furthermore, although both Demirel and Özal began to use the GAP project in their political campaigns during national elections in the south-east in order to increase their votes, and although both would argue that the project was for the region’s socio-economic development,¹³¹ the locals, in particular the Kurds, did not change their minds. So, these two famous Turkish leaders’ parties, who had both played significant

¹³¹ For instance, the ninth president of Turkey, Süleyman Demirel (2006), who played a major role in creating the project, argued that he was its founder and that he would not let anyone snatch the project away. On the other hand, Turgut Özal argued that it was his signature under all the dams created in the region.

roles in creating the GAP project, no longer received votes as they used to. Later, in 2008, when Prime Minister Recep T. Erdogan went to the region, partly in an attempt to secure its future votes, he claimed that the project would be completed by 2012 and the region would be better off (www.gov.tr).¹³² Such political claims gradually lost their meaning with the locals and they made a clear choice for the pro-Kurdish party.

There is no doubt that the progress of the pro-Kurdish political movement in the south-east region has had a profound effect on the attitude of all centrist parties, of both left and right perspectives, to the south-east. According to my research in the region, when the mainstream Turkish political parties began to lose their dominant position and did not receive votes from the region, they gradually removed their support from GAP. According to one of the participants in the group in Hasankeyf, “All this is politics and the Turkish government and politicians are punishing the Kurds for not being faithful.”

To recap, my research shows that, despite the fact that Turkey has tried to block the development of a pro-Kurdish party, closing it down several times and imprisoning many elected Kurdish politicians, the party receives a higher percentage of votes in the south-east than any other. In particular, in the 2015 general election, the pro-Kurdish movement, led by the People’s Democratic Party, or *Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, managed to break the 10% nation-wide vote threshold and became the fourth party in the Turkish parliament, with over 13% of the national vote.¹³³

So it has become clear that the loss of the Turkish mainstream parties’ dominant position to pro-Kurdish parties in the GAP region has resulted in negligence towards the GAP ‘social development’ project, not only by the leaders of the Turkish political parties, but also by the government, and this has played a significant role in the project failing to reach its ‘social development’ target. However, it would not be accurate to argue that the loss of these parties’ dominant position and the establishment of Kurdish political parties was the only reason why the project faced failure. There are other obstructions, such as the lack of Turkish policies for resolving

¹³² See also GAP’ta 26 yıldır süren yalan - ANF | Ajansa Nûçeyan a Firatê, anfturkce.net/news/gap-ta-26-yildir-suren-yalan (accessed 10 June 2014).

¹³³ See BBC, *Diyaibakir: HDP artık Türkiye partisi olma yükünü sırtland*, www.bbc.com/.../150608_diyarbakir_secim_gs2015; *Seçim 2015* | Hürriyet, *Türkiye Genel Seçimleri*, www.Hurriyet.com.tr/secim-2015/ (accessed 20 June 2015).

the Kurdish question and the failure to reach an agreement with the PKK regarding the ‘peace talks’, and this is discussed in the following section.

7.4. The lack of resolution of the Kurdish Question: failed policies and strategies

In this section I will analyze the failing policies and strategies of the Turkish state regarding the Kurdish question, in particular ‘peace processes’ or ‘peace talks’ between the PKK and the state, which have had a negative impact on the GAP project. To understand how the project has been obstructed by such policies and strategies, it is necessary to briefly restate the history of Turkish state politics towards the Kurds, after which I will scrutinize the ‘peace talks’ in order to understand why they failed and the negative impact this has had on the GAP project.

Since the creation of the republic, Turkish policy-makers have been very concerned by the Kurds’ demands for their political and cultural rights. The policy-makers always believed that these could ultimately lead to the independence of Kurdistan, and that such a development would damage the country’s republican formation (Kiliç 1998; Bozdağlıoğlu 2003). However, for the first time, the Turkish state began to put some effort into undertaking negotiations with the Kurds/PKK when the latter was at its strongest, in the 1990s.

The negotiations began with the first unilateral ceasefire by the PKK, in 1993, during Turgut Özal’s presidency. Although the unilateral ceasefire was a PKK initiative, it was partly the result of Özal’s influence. He encouraged Abdullah Öcalan, the PKK leader, to seek a ceasefire through the mediation of a group of pro-Kurdish parliamentarians and the Iraqi Kurdish leader, Jalal Talabani, head of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), an influential force in Iraqi Kurdistan (Barkey and Fuller 1997). Özal’s initiative was based on a very strong personal desire to make peace with the PKK, as Turkish state policy more broadly was quite sceptical at the time about the possibility of doing so.

Özal not only played a major role in the Turkish economy’s development model, which created a new entrepreneurial middle class, but also helped transform Turkey in the areas “of politics, culture and foreign policy initiatives in the post-1980 era” (Öniş 2004). In this context, he predicted that, without solving the Kurdish

question, Turkish economic growth and political stability would not be achievable.¹³⁴ He also knew that the GAP ‘social development’ concept would be just a dream amid the tense conflict in the south-east. There was also the associated external threat of water disputes with Syria and Iraq. When Turkey began to build dams on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, this created serious tension in the Middle East, because it decreased Iraq and Syria’s access to water (Schulz 1995).

Although there has not been serious conflict between these countries on the water issue, a group known as the Kurdish–Arab Front Against Turkey have several times threatened to destroy dams in Turkey (Ibid: 100). Özal knew that the unstable political conditions in the south-east had to be addressed, the first step being to reach a peaceful settlement with Turkey’s own Kurds in the form of the PKK. However, there were serious political obstructions in the way of peace talks in the early 1990s. So, in order for the 1993 ceasefire to be extended, Talabani and pro-Kurdish parliamentarians, “who claimed to have gone there [to Öcalan’s base in Syria] with Özal’s encouragement,” held discussions with Öcalan, and he subsequently called a second international press conference at which he announced an extension of the PKK ceasefire (Barkey and Fuller 1997).

According to Robin “The ceasefire was a unilateral declaration made as a ‘gesture of goodwill’” (1993: 669). It was to run from 20 March through to 15 April, with the benefits immediately being garnered through a more or less peaceful Kurdish New Year celebration, Newroz. Öcalan’s order to his militants ensured that the ceasefire took place successfully for a while; but the Turkish army, instead of using the opportunity to solve the Kurdish question, which would have made a huge difference to the continued implementation of the GAP social development project, continued their operations in the south-east. These military operations had an extremely negative effect on GAP proposals such as GAP-GIDEM (see Chapter Two), which aimed to encourage national and international entrepreneurs to invest in the region.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, the Turkish state claimed that “the PKK had suffered extensively during the October 1992 incursion of the Turkish army into northern Iraq”

¹³⁴ See Radikal, [www.radikal.com.tr/ Yazarlar/ Politika](http://www.radikal.com.tr/Yazarlar/Politika); Ruşen Çakır, *Türkiyenin Kurt Sorunu 11*, www.rusencakir.com/Turkiyenin-Kurt-Sorunu-11/14, Cengiz Çandar Özal (accessed 15 March 2015).

¹³⁵ See more regarding GAP-GIDEM in www.gap.gov.tr (accessed in December 2009); TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, *GAP Nedir*, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx.

(Barkey and Fuller 1997). Thus, the state and security forces claimed that the reason the PKK had declared a ceasefire was because it was getting weak; once it became stronger, it would attack again (Ibid). The Turkish security forces used this as their pretext to continue their military attacks on PKK bases during the ceasefire.

Moreover, during 1993 there was a vacuum in Turkish politics under Süleyman Demirel's leadership, as he "refused to take the ceasefire offer seriously, despite the fact that the PKK declaration had been met with great relief in Turkey as a possible end to the conflict that had been claiming a rising number of casualties among Turkish soldiers and costing billions of dollars" (Ibid: 70).

The billions of dollars being spent on the war between the PKK and Turkish security forces were coming from the central budget and, since the GAP project was financed by the central budget, this meant that these billions of dollars included financial resources originally intended for GAP. This became clear when I interviewed the regional director, Acikgoz (personal interview July 2011), who stated that although their target of completing the project was 2005, the government could not find credit to do so. The state could not provide a budget for the project because it was spending money on the war with the PKK.¹³⁶ Thus, as Açığöz states, the project was extended to 2010, later to 2012, and now to 2018, as a result of the budget deficit.

However, on 17 April 1993, Özal died from a heart attack and many people, including the PKK leader Öcalan, believed that he was deliberately killed¹³⁷ by a Turkish 'deep-state'¹³⁸.

Turkish 'deep-state' organization is based in the Turkish army, ranging from low to high level commanders (Gunter 2006). Top military generals may appear to be mere state officials, but they secretly support the 'Deep State' group, which has been extremely resistant to the idea of the existence of the Kurdish question, and would provoke anything to deny Kurdish basic rights or undermine anything related to them. Many journalists, young radical students, Kurdish politicians and ordinary people

¹³⁶ See Ekonomi, 30 yılda teröre harcanan para dudak uçuklattı! ekonomi.haber7.com/ekonomi/.../1034683-30-yilda-t.; İç Politika, PKK ile 30 yıllık mücadele 350 milyar dolar, www.haber7.com/ SİYASET/ İç Politika (accessed June 2015).

¹³⁷ See Ölümü şüpheli mezarı açılsın - Özgür Gündem, ozgur-gundem.com/.../olumu-supheli-mezari-acilsin; Özal suikasti faili meçhul bağlantılı - Politika, haber.star.com.tr/ Politika Haberleri (accessed June 2015).

¹³⁸ See also SABAH - Demirel derin devleti anlatıyor arxiv.sabah.com.tr/ozel/derin911/dosya_900.html; 'Derin devlet' nedir? - Zaman, www.zaman.com.tr/.../derin-devlet-nedir_497509.htm (accessed June 2015).

involved in any way with the rights of the Kurds, have suddenly disappeared or been killed by the 'Deep State' organization (Ibid) Though Gunter shows that the 'Deep-State' was not a specific organization with a leader, he correctly identifies that it was a mentality; "concerning what Turkey should be, namely strongly nationalist, statist, secular, and right-wing" (2006: 348). Gunter demonstrates that the 'Deep-State' somehow managed to institutionalize itself within the National Security Council (NSC).

The NSC's job was to advise the government on matters of internal and external security issues. Gunter also points out that, though it seems that the Cabinet runs the state, this power "actually lies elsewhere... in the military and other dubious and secret formations involving people either directly from within the institutions of the state or those who are very close to this establishment defined as 'the Deep State'"(Ibid: 336).

In Semdinli, a Kurdish town in south-east Turkey, in November 2005, "the Umit (Hope) bookstore owned by Seferi Yilmaz, a former PKK member ... was bombed" by the 'Deep-State' (Ibid: 344). Locals who witnessed the attack surrounded the car belonging to the three attackers, which had a civilian number plate - but turned out to be registered to the army unit in the town. Two of the men were officers of a paramilitary anti-terror intelligence unit while one was a former PKK member turned state informer (Ibid: 344). At the time, Turkish land forces, headed by General Yasar Buyukanit, strongly rejected any official connections with the Semdinli bombing, but the general stated that he knew one of the suspects and admired him as a 'good guy'.

Moreover, the public prosecutor, Ferhat Sarikaya, claimed that Buyukanit was attempting to influence the court by expressing his admiration for one of the officers charged with the bombing, and stated that Buyukanit was setting up an illegal force to provoke unrest among the Kurds. It was shortly after his statement about Buyukanit that the prosecutor was sacked by the Supreme Board of Prosecutors and Judges (HSYK). He was accused of making irrelevant claims. Furthermore, the state "removed Sabri Uzun, the chief of the Intelligence Department of the General Directorate of Security, who had sought to support Sarikaya" (Ibid: 345).

The former president and prime-minister, Suleyman Demirel, stated in a television interview that there are two states. "There is the state and there is the deep state... When a small difficulty occurs, the civilian state steps back and the deep state becomes the generator [of decisions]" (Ibid: 346).

So one of the reasons that the possible peace precesses failed was because the role of the 'deep-state' in Turkey, which organized to sabotage possible peace talks between the Turkish government and the PKK. This had a huge negative impact, not only on the peace talks themselves, but also on the progress of the GAP project.

Shortly after Özal's death, on 25 May 1993 a bus carrying unarmed army recruits was stopped in Bingöl province and 23 were killed by PKK militants under the regional commander Sakik, who later left the PKK and was arrested by the Turkish army in Iraqi Kurdistan (Robins 1993). This attack on Turkish soldiers came as a surprise, and Öcalan announced that the event had not been authorized, to his knowledge; this led to many questions as to whether it really was the PKK which was responsible, or whether it was a 'deep-state' organization wanting to sabotage the ceasefire.

However, the 1993 unilateral PKK ceasefire could have been an opportunity for peace in the region, which might have helped resolve the socio-economic issues in the south-east and/or enabled progress with the GAP project. Instead, the region sank deeper socially and economically, and the war between the PKK and Turkish security forces brought more destruction to the region and its inhabitants. So Turkey's agenda for the south-east during this period was mainly focused on the conflict rather than on the completion of the 'social development' project. Turkey continued to fight against the PKK and wanted to shelve GAP and the region's socio-economic problems.

During 1998 Turkey threatened Syria with war if the Syrian authorities did not expel the leader of the PKK, Abdullah Öcalan, who had been resident there since 1980. Shortly after Öcalan's departure from Syria, he was captured in Kenya and brought to Turkey (Gunter 2000: 850). Öcalan believed that, now he was back in Turkey - albeit in prison - it would be easier to negotiate for peace between Turkey and the PKK:

Instead of issuing a hardline appeal for renewed struggle during his trial for treason that ended on 29 June 1999 with a sentence of death, Öcalan issued a remarkable statement that calls for the implementation of true democracy to solve the Kurdish problem within the existing borders of a unitary Turkey, and thus fulfills Atatürk's ultimate hopes for a strong, united and democratic Turkey that can join what is now the European Union. (Ibid: 853)

Öcalan called on his militants to declare ceasefire and withdraw from Turkish territories to Mount Qandil and, in order to demonstrate the authenticity of their demands for peace, on Öcalan's instruction, a group of eight PKK militants handed themselves in to Turkish security forces and claimed that their entry into Turkey was a peace initiative.¹³⁹

During this period of ceasefire, the region was significantly more stable than during previous years, but as Turkey did not use the opportunity this political normalization period provided to focus on completing GAP social programmes in the region, in 2004, after a long wait outside Turkish territory, on Mount Qandil, when Turkey refused to consider 'peace talks', "the PKK regrouped its forces and called off its lopsided ceasefire" (Marcus 2007: 75-84).

A year after the ceasefire, in 2005, Prime Minister Recep T. Erdogan stated that Turkey's most pressing domestic issue was the 'Kurdish problem', and declared that Turkey must "resolve the discontent of its Kurdish population through democratic processes" (Uslu 2007: 157). The statement sparked new hope for the region's development. In particular, in 2008, when Erdoğan proposed a new GAP Action Plan with the target of completing the project by 2012 and, during 2009, when his government began its first serious talks with the PKK, which came to be known as the Oslo talks or Oslo process, and were carried out in secret there until 2011,¹⁴⁰ there was a positive atmosphere and a belief that normalization would continue in the south-east - and that spelt good news for GAP.

However, these first talks did not succeed because typical statist or 'deep-state' games were in play. The Oslo process came to an end when news of the meetings was leaked through a news agency in Turkey via unknown actors (Ensaroglu 2013). With the end of the Oslo process, the PKK increased its attacks on Turkish security forces, one of which was an attack on Silvan, in the province of Diyarbakir. During the following days, the region suddenly turned into a war zone between the PKK and the Turkish army. While the PKK's attacks increased in the

¹³⁹ See Öcalan'ın büyük barış mücadelesi - Özgür Gündem, www.ozgur-gundem.com/.../ocalanin-buyuk-baris-mu; PKK'lılar Habur'da askere teslim oldu - GÜNCEL Haberleri, www.haber7.com/GÜNCEL (accessed March 2015).

¹⁴⁰ See Al Jazeera, *Turkey continues peace talks with the PKK*, www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2013/.../2013110153318352861.ht; Neşe Düzel, *Avni Özgürel: Türkiye barışa hızla yaklaşıyor*, arsiv.taraf.com.tr/yazilar/nese-duzel/avni.../21872/ (accessed March 2015).

region, the Turkish state did not only respond to these but also turned on Kurdish people and politicians whom they believed had relations with the PKK. Over 8,000 Kurdish activists, politicians and journalists were imprisoned under arbitrary terrorism laws (*The Guardian*, 7 May 2013).

However, after the failure of the secret peace talks in 2012, the Turkish Prime minister and the PKK leader publically revealed that new peace talks were taking place between the state and the PKK. It was claimed that these involved negotiations with “the ultimate aim of ending the hostilities on both sides and disarming the PKK in return for reforms improving the rights of Turkey’s Kurds” (Nykanen 2013: 85-102).

In December 2012, the first announcement regarding negotiations with the PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan came from Prime Minister Erdogan, followed by Öcalan’s historic ‘peace talks’ announcement during Newroz (meaning new day or Kurdish New Year) celebrations in the Kurdish unofficial capital city, Diyarbakir, on 21 March 2013 through the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy (BDP) party’s MPs, Pervin Buldan and Sirri Sureyya Onder:

We have now reached a point where guns must go silent and ideas and politics must speak. We will unite in the face of those who try to split us. From now on, a new period begins when politics, not guns, will come to the fore. It is now time for armed elements to withdraw outside the country. (Ensaroglu 2013: 7-18).

Öcalan’s announcement was cheered by over one million Kurdish people, who were gathered for Newroz, and who perceived this as a political victory.¹⁴¹ The announcement of peace was accepted by the senior PKK leader, Murat Karayilan, situated in Mount Qandil.¹⁴² Although opposition parties such as the Nationalist Movement Party or *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP) indicated their concerns and were radically against talks with the PKK, believing that this would split the country apart, the Turkish government and many of the Turkish and Kurdish public saw Öcalan’s announcement at Newroz and the withdrawal of the PKK as positive, and

¹⁴¹ From my personal notes, when I participated in the Newroz celebration, March 2013, Diyarbakir.

¹⁴² Mount Qandil is located in northern Iraq or Iraqi Kurdistan, near the Iranian border and about 50 km south of the Turkish border. It is considered to be the largest PKK base in the region (Ensaroglu 2013).

welcomed the peace talks: “‘The war is over’, assorted screeds declared” (*Economist*, 30 March 2013).

However, following the recent outbreak of civil war in Syria, the Syrian Kurds, led by the Democratic Union Party or *Partiya Yekîtiya Demokra* (PYD), which is regarded as the Syrian counterpart to the PKK, are in the process of creating their own autonomy.¹⁴³ So, since the Turkish state does not want to see another Kurdish autonomous state, based on PKK ideology, alongside Iraqi Kurdistan, which “would mean ... two officially recognized Kurdish regions would flank Turkey’s inhabited [south-east] region, providing inspiration, support and resources to Turkey’s Kurds to similarly realize their autonomy” (Nykanen 2013: 88), Turkey has continued its traditional policies, refusing to solve the Kurdish question. In other words, the ‘peace talks’, which had been perceived as a great opportunity for the region’s stabilization and the development of its socio-economy through the GAP project, ended with a strong and contradictory statement from President Erdogan;¹⁴⁴ all of which shows that the GAP ‘social development’ project is not going to be completed in the near future.

In summary, there has been a lack of constructive strategies being implemented towards a healthy peaceful resolution of the Kurdish question, and this has had a significant negative impact on GAP’s social programmes for the south-east. As a result, the idea has been swept under the carpet, although it was supposed to rebalance the economy between the west of Turkey and the south-east.

To conclude this section, my research explores three issues (indicated above) which have been among the main obstacles preventing GAP from being realized. Having suggested three internal or domestic interrelated political issues that have played a role in preventing the GAP ‘social development’ project from reaching its target, I would advocate looking beyond these three internal obstacles and analyzing GAP in the context of the external or global political development framework that has faced the individual nation-state ever since the immediate post-Cold War period.

¹⁴³ See Cengiz Candar, *Yeni jeopolitikte Türkiye, Öcalan, PKK*, Radikal.com.tr, 24 April 2013; Rusen Cakir, *Hükümet Öcalan ile niye anlaştı?* <http://www.internethaber.com> (accessed 9 May 2013).

¹⁴⁴ See The Guardian, *Turkey: it is not possible to continue peace process*, www.theguardian.com/World/Turkey; Zaman, *President Erdoğan says Turkey never had a Kurdish problem*, www.todayszaman.com/anasayfa_president-erdogan-says-turkey-never; Hürriyet, *Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan: Kardeşim ne Kürt sorunu ya*, www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/28457474.asp (accessed July 2015).

Thus, the following section will make GAP's unfinished 'social development' project more comprehensible by analyzing it from the point of view of a cosmopolitan regime of democracy being an element of the post-Cold War 'new world order' which Turkey perceives as a vital threat to its unitary state.

7.5. Cosmopolitan regime of democracy: block to Turkish GAP's 'social development' strategy?

To explore to what extent the notion of cosmopolitan democracy has become an obstacle to the GAP 'social development' project being realized, the following discussion focuses on these issues: (1) States Prior to Post-Cold War World Politics (2) End of the Cold War: Shifts in the World Order and the Rise of Cosmopolitanism. The above are discussed mainly to make the third and fourth sections more comprehensible: (3) Turkey-EU: Implementation of Cosmopolitan Democracy, and (4) Cosmopolitanism: GAP Social Development Project and Turkey's Approach.

7.5.1. States prior to post-Cold War world politics

Although it took a long time (after the Westphalia Treaty of 1648) for sovereign states to occupy the central position in world politics, they came to dominate world politics in the mid-nineteenth century, "with territorially based nation-states born one after another within Europe (Germany and Italy) as well as in its periphery (the United States and Japan)" (Inoguchi 1999: 174). The concept of the 'sovereign' or 'nation-state' was informed by the 'Realist' view that the nation-state is the sole actor in world politics, controlling every aspect of national and international politics.

According to E. H. Carr (1981: 63), who analyzed the nature of the state within Spinoza's (1632–77) account of state development, "statesmen had contributed more to the understanding of politics than of theory and, above all, theologians; for they have put themselves to the school of experience, and have therefore taught nothing which does not bear upon our practical needs." Spinoza goes further, as Carr relates, "Spinoza declares that every man does what he does according to the laws of his nature and to the highest right of nature" (Ibid: 63). So the crucial continuity of the power-seeking behaviour of individuals and states is deeply rooted in human nature.

As regards power-seeking, the work of Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), reveals that before the names of ‘Just and Unjust’ can be invoked, there has to be some coercive power. So, power is and always has been the main value required for the survival of the state.

Although the state dates as far back as Thucydides (c. 460–395 BC) and Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527), it was initially based on the basic unit - the *polis* or city-state. However, after the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), the sovereign state became the principle actor in world politics (Dunne and Schmidt 2001). The justification for the statist approach, based mainly on a ‘Realist’ perspective, is that a desire for dominance through power politics is required in order to repel external threats, to maintain state independence, and to create stabilization in world politics. As Pettiford and Curley put it, realists “believe laws of realism are immune to moral injection” (1999: 46).

In supporting this view of the stabilization of world politics, Carr, one of the leading Realist thinkers between 1939 and 1979 (Hollis and Smith 1990), described how world politics worked from the Realist perspective. According to Carr (see Michael Cox, 2001, in his introduction to Carr’s *The Twenty Years’ Crisis*), the world was empirical and he saw the world ‘as it is’. He believed that association with non-governmental organizations could bring disaster to the state structure. Carr rejected what he saw as utopian views, that is, that there was a universal standard of morality. In his perspective, there were “no absolute standards save that of fact, and [...] morality therefore could only be relative and not universal” (Ibid). The idea that universal moral principles exist is not in the interests of Realism.

In this regard, because of the abstract nature of international politics, Realism believes that states are the only actors that can be counted on in international relations. They believe that, to gain the highest authority, an independent sovereign state must not recognize a higher power above itself. For example, “Transnational corporations, international organizations, and religious denominations, like all other ideologies, rise and fall but the ‘state’ is the one permanent feature in the landscape of [...] global politics” (Dunne and Schmidt 2001: 150). So, the whole idea of Realism is that any development, internally and externally, has to be for the interests of the state. Prior to the post-Cold War period, vital areas such as food, water, health, environment, politics, economics and society were attended to and regulated by the

state and developed for the interests of the state. The state was virtually the sole actor in all areas.

In the case of the Turkish policy of transforming GAP from a matter of land and water resources alone into a ‘social development’ project, the policy-makers evaluated the project in terms of the long-term self-interest of the Turkish state - as is a requirement of Realism. As stated in Chapter Three, since the creation of modern Turkey, the state/military has acted as and considered itself to be the sole guardian of the Turkish republic, and it was considered imperative that the state should have the dominant role in the economy, reformism and politics. Despite the fact that the Turkish state/military intervention into civilian politics has triggered major criticism, the state has been accepted as the most appropriate actor in the eyes of the Turkish public.

As I briefly mentioned in Chapter Five, Turkey is the only country that sees the state as the ‘Father state’ (Devlet baba). Mustafa Kemal, when he built Turkey, extended his own name, adding ‘Atatürk’, which means ‘Father of the Turks’. Hence, since the Turkish state/military is perceived by the majority of the Turkish republic as a phenomenal and sacred actor, it has had no difficulty in securing its position and the invisible dimension of its power in Turkish politics, particularly with regard to issues related to security, geo-politics, geo-economics, the Kurdish question or the GAP project.

We know that elsewhere military organizations have played an important role on behalf of the state in establishing the social, political and economic conditions for the population (Fidal 1975). In particular, for people living in developing countries the military is the only important actor, and this shapes the quality of their existence. The military’s role may seem less important in developed or semi-developed countries, but it still plays a certain role in politics as well as in economics and security (Ibid).

However, to understand why I describe the Turkish state as the decision-maker, in relation to GAP in particular, Jacoby’s view on the state is worth examining. Jacoby notes that “Within Mann’s encyclopedic account of state development, there are two regime types — semi-authoritarian incorporation and autocratic militarism — in which military elites remain politically active” (2005: 641). He argues that, since the early 1980s in Turkey, we have seen two regimes. One is the semi-authoritarian incorporation, which still predominates in areas of the

country not administered through emergency legislation. This model is prevalent in economically developed areas such as the Marmara region and the west of Turkey. In the Kurdish regions of the south-east, on the other hand, a second model, autocratic militarism, is visible (Ibid). This model has been institutionalized under a new constitutional structure, following the 1980 junta, as a means of dealing with the Kurdish uprising and regional socio-economic issues in the frame of the state's policy. Thus, examining the GAP 'social development' project without considering the position of the Turkish state will not do the subject justice.

The following section discusses the post-Cold War 'new world order' and the rise of cosmopolitan democracy, which I will explore in relation to Turkish politics, regarding GAP in the framework of this 'new world order', and I will also investigate the cosmopolitan regime of democracy, led by global governance organizations such as the EU.

7.5.2. End of the Cold War: shifts in the world order and the rise of cosmopolitanism

Since the immediate post-Cold War period, Turkey has been struggling to maintain the model of autocratic militarism in the south-east. The post-Cold War period involved the creation of a 'new world order' based on cosmopolitan democracy, which has had an impact on Turkish policy regarding the GAP project, because the project was implemented within the framework of the 'old world order', which was based on an economic and security paradigm.

During the Cold War, the world was divided into two predominant orders: capitalism (US/Western Europe) and communism (Soviet Union/Eastern Europe), and the whole of world politics was based on these two blocs. However, when Soviet forces left Germany in 1994, and when Soviet leaders declared their readiness to withdraw their troops from the rest of Eastern Europe in 1995, the old international order rapidly crumbled and a 'new world order' arose.

During the Cold War period, states were the most important actors and symbols in international relations (Williams 2008: 7), and managed to keep the peace

between the two blocs for 45 years. With the end of the Cold War, the position of the state has been increasingly challenged.

In liberal thinking, the contemporary nation-state is fragmented by the development of transnational relations. In a globally penetrating web of transnational relations, actors are able to challenge the political, military or economic power of a state. So, liberals believe that the increasingly complex and globally penetrating web of sovereign states is “hardly more than a symbol of territorial integrity” (Eriksson and Giacomello 2006: 230).

For contemporary liberals such as Anthony McGrew (2002), since the end of the Cold War, liberal “internationalism no longer appears, as E. H. Carr once described it, a ‘utopian edifice’ but on the contrary constitutes, in the absence of any secular ideological competitors, the dominant discourse of the emerging post-Cold War world order” (Ibid: 267). Liberal internationalism, for McGrew, provides “a special claim to what world politics is and can be: a state of peace” (Ibid: 268).

According to liberal internationalists, the discourse provided by “liberal internationalism has constituted a principal intellectual alternative to realism and geopolitics not only for explaining world order as it is, but also prescribing how it could be” (Ibid: 268). Liberal internationalists believe that

[s]ince conflict and war are an endemic feature of a system of states in which sovereigns seek to maximize their power, liberal internationalism holds that it is only through the governance or transcendence of power politics that the necessary conditions for the promotion and realization of human freedom can be effectively achieved. (Ibid: 268)

It has become clear that, since the post-Cold War period, “[m]any issues and problems – pollution, the use of diminishing resources, the regulation of global trade – [could not] be acted on effectively by any single nation-state” (Rumford, 2003: 20). In order to create a stable world system, cosmopolitan regimes of democratization, as one element of globalization, have been developed by liberal thinkers such as Archibugi, Held, Beck and others “with the aim of providing intellectual arguments in favour of an expansion of democracy, both within states and at the global level” (Archibugi 2004: 437) to fulfill a Kantian idea of perpetual peace in the world.

In order to achieve perpetual global peace, the cosmopolitan theorists or liberals have begun to reduce the power of the state, in the belief that “world peace will come through individual freedom, the free market, and the peaceful and voluntary associations of civil society” (Navari 2008: 29). This approach takes the view that “international relations could be guided by the ideals of democracy and the rule of law” (Archibugi 2004: 437). Thus, the idea of a cosmopolitan regime of democracy under international and global institutions has been regarded as the perfect method by which to stabilize or restore global politics.

This idea has been popular with those who were in favour of global democracy, and disliked particularly by those states which fitted the autocratic militarism model; because such a “notion of ‘globalizing democracy’ [was] understood simply as a phenomenon affecting the internal regimes of the various states” (Ibid: 438). As Archibugi puts it:

This was the basic idea behind cosmopolitan democracy — to globalize democracy while, at the same time, democratizing globalization (in an increasingly vast literature, see Archibugi and Held, 1995; Held, 1995, 1997, 2002; Falk, 1995, 1998; McGrew, 1997, 2002; Archibugi and Koehler, 1997; Archibugi et al., 1998; Habermas, 1998, 2001; Kaldor, 1999; Linklater, 1998; Dryzek, 1999; Thompson, 1999; Holden, 2000; Franceschet, 2003; Archibugi, 2003; Morrison, 2003). (Ibid: 438)

To recap, cosmopolitanism has put the nation-state under serious pressure by requiring democratization of domestic policies and insisting they take up a political position within a globalized world system (Rumford 2003), which required that political power be handled by democratic actors such as international institutions, the UN, EU or other non-governmental organizations, which were intended to support the model of cosmopolitan democracy in order to force states to uphold democracy and allow the citizens of the globe to enjoy fundamental human rights (Held 1995) as well as promote the functioning of a democratic market economy. Beck describes the notion of cosmopolitanism very clearly:

The cosmopolitan gaze opens wide and focuses — stimulated by the postmodern mix of boundaries between cultures and identities, accelerated by

the dynamics of capital and consumption, empowered by capitalism undermining national borders, excited by the global audience of transnational social movements, and guided and encouraged by the evidence of worldwide communication (often just another word for misunderstanding) on central themes such as science, law, art, fashion, entertainment, and, not least, politics. Worldwide public perception and debate on global ecological danger or global risks of a technological and economic nature ('Frankenstein food') have laid open the cosmopolitan significance of fear. And if we needed any proof that even genocide and the horrors of war now have a cosmopolitan aspect, this was provided by the Kosovo War in spring 1999 when Nato bombed Serbia in order to enforce the implementation of human rights. (Beck 2000: 79)

Beck's view (Ibid: 91) is that 'old fashioned modernists' believe that a cohesive modern society is essentially "held together by language, military service and patriotism," whereas cosmopolitanization depends on ethnic diversity, which allows for allegiances to a variety of nation-states. Archibugi and Held (2011: 343) defined cosmopolitan democracy as "an attempt to generate democratic governance at a variety of levels, including the global level." According to this concept, citizens are free to become involved in global politics without having to adhere to their own specific state governments. This transformation in world politics could have a significant impact on the domestic policies of nation-states, leading to greater accountability and wider representation at both a global and domestic level.

Despite the fact that there are those who challenge the idea of cosmopolitan democracy, such as "Robert Dahl, Ralf Dahrendorf, David Miller, Philippe Schmitter, and many others, who have declared, more or less politely, that the idea of applying the concept of democracy beyond the state is premature, naïve, or simply wrong and dangerous" (Ibid: 435), the supporters of the cosmopolitan model have been very numerous, their belief founded on the idea that international institutions will carry out democratic functions:

the UN Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe; independent nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as Amnesty International and Freedom House; and transnational associations, such as trade unions and business

organizations, all regularly monitor the transparency, corruption level, and human rights regimes of individual countries. (Ibid: 435-6)

Through such international organizations, cosmopolitan democracy has been given power to play a direct political role in citizens' lives. The cosmopolitan regime has focused "on the role of citizens who should be empowered in order to exercise their rights and duties, not just in their nations, but also in the political communities which affect their lives" (Archibugi 2012: 11). International organizations such as the EU have become a main bearer or porter of 'cosmopolitan democracy', "to ensure that the democratic state will be the global norm" (Rumford 2003: 384).

As I indicated in Chapter One, the enforcement of cosmopolitan democracy, has been imposed on candidates for membership of the EU. Turkey has been knocking on the EU door to take its place in the club, and this has had a vital impact upon its internal politics, including regional socio-politics and socio-economic development policy such as GAP. Thus, to clarify why GAP's social programmes remain incomplete, the following section is about Turkish-EU relations and the concern of Turkish policy-makers over the development of cosmopolitan democracy led by the EU.

7.5.3. Turkey-EU: implementation of cosmopolitan democracy

Turkey, in fighting to join, has perceived the EU in terms of potential economic and security benefits, but with the end of the Cold War, when the criteria for membership were expanded, and the potential impact of the EU's support for the cosmopolitan regime of democracy became more strongly felt in Turkish regional domestic politics (for example, with regard to the GAP Project), the Turkish state and its political elites became sceptical as to whether they should join. For instance, according to Rumford (Ibid: 380), "The Turkish state and its political elites have frequently resisted calls for democratization on the basis that this amounts to foreign interference in the legitimate business of running the country."

With the end of the Cold War, the EU has come to be seen as two-faced: opportunity and threat. In terms of opportunity for Turkey, the development of cosmopolitan democracy in Turkey meant that the Turkish struggle for EU accession

would not be the major problem. It should be reiterated that Turkey, which, from its creation, adopted western civilization and hoped to join the EU club, already had a number of economic and security agreements with the West.

Since the Second World War, Turkey has become a member of several European and Western organizations, “such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD [1948]), the Council of Europe (1949) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO [1952])” (McLaren and Müftüler-Baç 2003: 196). In 1963, Turkey signed the Treaty of Ankara with the European Community (EC) to “establish an Association Agreement”, and this was the first serious indication of Turkey’s movement toward full membership (Leicester 1995: 1). Most importantly, in April 1987 Turkey made its formal application for full membership of the European Community (Müftüler-Bac 1999: 240).

It has been argued that Turkey’s accession to the European Union could not only “bridge the cultural gap between the East and the West but would bolster the ailing Turkish economy and create an opening for the EU to Asia” (Moustakis and Chaudhuri 2005: 78). Furthermore, Turkey’s accession to the EU would provide an important source of employment for the young generation. Based on this view, the EU was perfect for the Turkish state. Turkey following the criteria of cosmopolitan democracy guaranteed its accession to the EU, and this would mean growth in the Turkish economy and a stronger position for Turkey in the global web. However, in order to join the EU, Turkey was asked to ensure the following:

- (i) stable institutions governing democracy; (ii) the rule of law, respect for human rights and protection of minorities; the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity to cope with competitive pressure; and (iii) the ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the principles of political, economic and monetary union. (Muftuler-Bac, 1999: 241)

The Copenhagen European Council in June 1993 claimed that countries developing solid institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and regard for minorities create a functioning market economy, and “incorporation of the community *acquis*—adhere to the various political, economic, and monetary aims of the EU” (Moustakis and Chaudhuri 2005: 78). The EU begins accession negotiations

with a candidate state only if it has satisfied political criteria defined as: a stable democracy, respecting human rights, the rule of law and the protection of minorities (Sarigil 2007: 39).

The Copenhagen criteria (1993) have forced Turkey to reform its legal system and bring in new laws to create a real and stable democracy. Though Turkey has adopted 143 new laws, which “ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and [...] the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”, it has not yet practically implemented any of these laws (Ibid: 85).

The Helsinki summit of the European Council in 1999 accepted Turkey as a candidate for full membership (McLaren 2000). In December 2004, the EU agreed to open negotiations with Turkey and, in October 2005, stated that it was open to new members on condition that they continued with “domestic reforms and the extension of the customs union to all new member states” (Diez 2005: 197). Ultimately, one of the specific EU demands of Turkey concerned the Kurdish question and the socio-economic issues of the south-east region.

However, the notion of cosmopolitan democracy or of transnational processes of democratization, led by the EU and contained within the EU criteria, are frequently perceived by the Turkish state and the EU-sceptics in Turkey, who form part of a mainly statist elite, “predominantly traditionalists from the civilian–military elite” (Aybet 2006: 344), as being contrary to the interests of domestic harmony and a threat to national integrity” (Rumford 2003: 380).

Despite the fact that politicians, military commanders and bureaucrats who control the Turkish state, and whose lifestyle has been closely aligned to the West, wanted to join the EU in order to benefit in terms of economic prosperity and security, and who were also supposed to turn Turkey into a more advanced modern society by modernizing its way of life along Western lines, they have become strongly sceptical towards accession, because of the cosmopolitan criteria advocated by the EU.

Turkey in the EU would mean a Turkey embedded within a system of rules, one which accepts cosmopolitan democracy. In other words, the EU and the Council of Europe give power to citizens through democratic bodies, using EU criteria and human rights organizations to legitimize civilian freedoms relating to culture and

identity, which were formerly denied to repressed minorities by the national state (Ibid: 388).

The Turkish state and predominantly civilian–military elite want to continue to be the only principal actor in both economic and political affairs; because any external organization such as the EU, with its cosmopolitanization of democracy, is considered as a threat to national sovereignty, traditional values and the traditional system of internal security. Employing cosmopolitanism means the end of the 1980s constitution, which is based on authoritarian laws restricting the freedom and rights of minorities and allowing the military to intervene in Turkish politics, particularly when dealing with the Kurdish question and the socio-economic development of the south-east. The Turkish state wants a more nationalistic, isolationist Turkey with a politically powerful military, because it fears that the Kurdish question would otherwise undermine the unity of the Turkish Republic. For example, former president Süleyman Demirel, who is believed to be the creator of GAP, and who argued at the time that GAP was a national project and therefore had to be completed, also claimed that “lifting the language ban would pose a threat to Turkey, [and] protecting the official language is one of the musts of being a unitary state” (Rumford 2007: 55).

Moreover, the chief of the General Staff, Yasar Büyükanit, refused to countenance the idea of the Kurds being a legally protected minority. He stated that such “approaches are an insult to the Turkey of Kemal Atatürk [. . .] Atatürk would have been deeply saddened if he had lived through these days” (Gunter 2007: 121). Quite simply, the Turkish state, the army and also extreme nationalists are not willing to attempt to follow the criteria for EU democracy.

Since the creation of the modern Turkish Republic, Turkish army officers have always been trained in westernized military schools, “where to a certain extent they became familiar not only with new military techniques, but also with the Western way of life and Western culture and ideas” (Sarigil 2007: 47), which shows that the military inclination is not to stay away from the EU, rather that it has its own perspective on EU accession. While the Turkish military recognizes full membership of the EU as desirable in certain ways, it is deeply concerned about losing its position of power within Turkish politics and, more importantly, it is concerned that the state may have to leave regional socio-economic policy to the regionally elected actors, in which case the military would be more than likely to lose control over how the GAP

project should be implemented. All this makes the military sceptical about the future of Turkish accession to the EU.

Many members of the predominantly civilian–military elite, particularly in the army, have expressed their fears that full integration into the EU will tear Turkey apart. The unification of Turkey is one of the most sensitive issues among this elite and the army. They believe in the “connections between EU demands and those of the Sevres Treaty, which was to divide up the Ottoman lands after the First World War, and they emphasize the overlap between EU demands about minority rights” (Aydinli 2004: 155). It should not be forgotten that some still see Europe as an historical enemy. General Ilhan’s statement illustrates this: “We have been waging war against Europeans for the last 1500 years... that is why all European parliament decisions, e.g. Cyprus, Armenian, Kurdish, have all been against us – they are still waging a war against us” (Ibid: 155).

Moreover, the National Action Party, *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP), which was formed under the leadership of Alpaslan Türkeş (1917–97) in the 1960s, “has a long history of involvement with paramilitary insurgencies, organized political violence and state-centric totalitarian political scenarios” (Canefe and Tanıl 2007: 128). This party is not just EU-sceptic, it is anti-EU, because its formation was based on the nationalist movement.

The EU’s criteria of human rights, religious rights and the rule of law are viewed with great suspicion by the MHP. This nationalist right-wing party regards EU democracy as purely divisive for Turkey. For example, when Mesut Yilmaz (the former leader of the Motherland Party (ANAP)), suggested that cultural rights could be granted to the Kurds, in response the deputy leader of the MHP, Sevkett Bulent Yahnici, declared that he would not accept any alternative views or EU demands for Kurdish rights. He stated that it was impossible for Turkey to discuss any cultural rights for the Kurds (Rumford 2007: 57-8). This included barring the Kurds from taking any key role in socio-economic decision making in relation to the GAP project.

Turkey has been put under pressure by the EU democratic criteria in relation to the Kurdish question and the social economy of the south-east region. In short, EU criteria requires a membership mandate; not only the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and protection of minority rights, but also a guarantee of regional socio-economic development. In other words, the GAP project should be nurtured within the cosmopolitan regime of democracy.

Nevertheless, since the EU has begun to negotiate with Turkey, Turkish domestic and foreign policies have undergone some important alterations, such as constitutional and legal changes which appear quite radical. For instance, the Turkish state agreed that “efforts would be made to ‘remove obstacles’ to Kurdish-language broadcasting and education” (Ibid: 55). Furthermore, after the Helsinki Council summit, the then foreign minister, Ismail Cem, stated that Kurdish cultural rights would be extended, especially in the area of language and broadcasting. He cited “the ban on Kurdish language broadcasting as an obstacle to democracy and human rights” and declared that “everyone living in Turkey should have the right to broadcast in their own mother tongue” (Ibid: 55).

Most importantly, in 1999, Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz visited the Kurdish city of Diyarbakir and said: “The road to the EU passes through Diyarbakir” (Gunter 2007: 117-18). What Yilmaz meant was not only that Turkey should consider the basic rights of Kurds in the region but also that the region’s backward social economy should be considered within the framework of GAP. So, one could argue that this was the first time that any Turkish leaders realized that GAP could be seen not only in terms of economic growth but also that it should be perceived within the framework of the cosmopolitan criteria required by the EU.

However, the state policy-makers and elite have begun to see the EU and the associated cosmopolitanization as a threat to the unification of the Turkish republic, simply because the regime of cosmopolitan democracy supports “certain ethnic or cultural groups that, although willing to continue to be part of their state of origin, want to obtain specific collective rights” (Archibugi 2008: 227).

The Turkish state, politicians and ruling elite were concerned about the impact of EU accession on Turkey’s traditional system of internal security, and also feared abandonment and loss of territory. They became more EU-sceptical, thinking that the ‘Sèvres syndrome’ might be reconstructed within the context of the EU and cosmopolitan democracy (Aybet 2006).

Without doubt, the Turkish state, politicians and ruling elite feared that the concept of cosmopolitan democracy would call for a rethinking of Turkey’s politics regarding GAP, propelling it away from its traditional approach towards one more concerned with the rights of locals. They became concerned that this new policy would give the Kurds a chance, for instance, to demand their collective rights, and

this concern has caused total confusion for the Turkish state and GAP policy-makers over what to do with the so-called ‘social development’ project. The following section is more directly focused on this matter and analyzes to what extent the cosmopolitan regime of democracy, led by non-governmental international institutions, has played a role in fostering a sceptical attitude in the Turkish state towards the completion of the ‘social development’ project.

7.5.4. Cosmopolitanism: the GAP social development project and Turkey’s approach

As I have already pointed out, when Turkey proposed the GAP ‘social development’ project, it considered it within the framework of economic growth and security, not in terms of the cultural and political dimensions of the south-east. However, since the post-Cold War period, Turkey has come under pressure from external international institutions and political developments in the form of cosmopolitan democracy as an element of the ‘new world order’ or globalization, led by the EU and other non-governmental organizations, in relation to GAP’s purpose as a social development scheme.

For instance, in 1993 the World Bank established an appeals mechanism, allowing people and riparian countries “adversely affected by Bank funded projects to file claims regarding violations of its policies, procedures and loan agreements” (WDC 2000: 19). When Turkey began to reverse the water flow in attempting to fill the Atatürk Dam, Syria began a financial campaign against the GAP project, and managed to block international financial assistance for its completion. Syria campaigned successfully against funding and convinced the World Bank that GAP should not be financed until Turkey worked out a riparian treaty. They managed to stop \$32 billion (US) funding being provided by the World Bank (El-Fadel *et al* 2002: 103). This setback drastically affected the Turkish national economy, and the GAP project was postponed for years. The Syrian government made a clear statement to the international community that the project would eventually “lead to something paramount to an environmental, social and cultural disaster for the Syrian state” (Knudsen 2003: 208).

Thus Turkey began to realize that it could not ignore international institutions and carry out the GAP project purely within its own policy framework, though in 1988 President Turgut Özal said: ‘we don't tell Arabs what to do with their oil, so we don't accept any suggestion from them about what to do with our water’ (Darwish 1998).

Furthermore, the World Commission on Dams (WCD), which was formed in 1997 and began to operate in 1998, in order to review the socio-economic, environmental and social effectiveness of large dams globally and assess alternatives for water and energy resource management, indicated that:

Large dams have had serious impacts on the lives, livelihoods, cultures and spiritual existence of indigenous and tribal peoples. Due to neglect and lack of capacity to secure justice because of structural inequities, cultural dissonance, discrimination and economic and political marginalisation, indigenous and tribal peoples have suffered disproportionately from the negative impacts of large dams, while often being excluded from sharing in the benefits. (WCD 2000: 110)

The WCD requested that, at the end of any dam project, the host state should consider:

Gender relationships and power structures are all too often detrimental to women. Extensive research has documented gender inequalities in access to, and control of, economic and natural resources. In Asia and Africa for example, women may have use rights over land and forests, but are rarely allowed to own and/or inherit the land they use. (Ibid: 114)

However, the displacement in the south-east as a result of the GAP project has deeply disrupted and affected the lives of local people, mainly women and children, because women and adult children who reside on family land were not entitled to compensation as individuals (Morvaridi 2004). As regards unequal rights for women, the EU gender equality acquis has been written into Turkish legislation. The EU stated in its 2004 report: “Intensified efforts will be needed for full alignment with EU standards in these fields, in particular as regards the full respect of women’s rights and improving the role of

women in political, economic and social life” (Commission of the European Communities 2004: 22).¹⁴⁵

Turkey has become aware that it cannot ignore the region’s cultural and political rights, including those related to the environment, historical sites, cultural heritage and inhabitants. In other words, GAP has faced the challenges from the EU and international non-governmental organizations, which required that Turkey should set up a sustainable water policy that would be in the interests of the region.¹⁴⁶

These international non-governmental organizations have had a powerful impact on Turkish water policy in the south-east, having already implemented effective high profile “campaigns includ[ing those concerning] the Three Gorges dams in China, the Pak Mun in Thailand, Ilisu in Turkey, Ralco in Chile, Epupa in Namibia, the Lesotho Highlands” (WCD 2000: 19). For example, when national and international companies such as Balfour Beatty (UK and USA), Impregilo (Italy), Skanska (Sweden), ABB Power Generation, Sulzer Hydro (Switzerland and Austria) and the Turkish companies, Nurol, Kiska and Tekfen considered becoming involved in the Ilisu Dam as part of the GAP project (Morvaridi 2004: 723), these contractors were guaranteed credit of about \$850 million from the Turkish agency the State Hydraulic Works (DSI) to carry out the construction of the dam (Bosshard 1998). However, “[e]ach contractor approached their government’s Export Credit Agency (ECA) to underwrite support for their involvement in the project against the risk of non-payment (Morvaridi 2004: 723). One of the reasons that the contractors were concerned related to attacks by environmentalists and international news agencies, which stressed that the Ilisu dam project was a threat to the environment and the ‘cradle of civilization’ (Boutros-Ghali 1991: 41).

Moreover, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Corner House, Berne Declaration, ECA-Watch, Forests and European Union Resource Network (FERN), Kurdish Human Rights Project (KHRP), and World

¹⁴⁵ See Commission of the European Communities, ec.europa.eu/information_society/.../COM_2004_0356_F_EN_ACTE.pdf. EN. EN. Commission of the European Communities, Brussels, 30.4. 2004. COM (2004) 356 final (accessed 2 April 2015).

¹⁴⁶ See World Wildlife Fund (2005), *To dam or not to dam? Five years on from the World*, http://wwf.panda.org/about_our_earth/about_freshwater/freshwater_resources/to_dam_or_not_to_dam/; Commission of the European Communities, *2004 Regular Report*, ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key.../2004/rr_tr_2004_en.pdf; Dams and Development: A New Framework for Decision; www.internationalrivers.org/.../world_commission_on_dams_final_report (accessed 2 April 2015).

Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED), as well as local activists have continued the campaign against the Ilisu dam via the initiative to Save Hasankeyf (ISH). These groups highlighted the fact that the project did not “meet international standards relating to environmental protection, resettlement, archaeological preservation, and negotiation which affected communities and other nations” (21 August KHRP 2007).

Through the challenges of the NGOs to Turkish water policy in the south-east, the region’s inhabitants have begun to seek a role in the GAP project. Based on my empirical research, it is evident that they (in particular local Kurds) have begun to refuse the ‘top-down’ model of GAP and want to ensure that the project is carried out in the interests of their region, including their cultural heritage and identity rights, at least operating within the framework of EU democratic requirements. In this regard, one should bear in mind that the Kurds particularly favour joining the EU. Turkey in the EU would mean the end of authoritarian laws restricting Kurdish rights and freedoms. The Kurds believe that if Turkey were part of the new EU model of cosmopolitan democracy, they would have not only more opportunity to express their cultural and social identity freely, but would also play a major role in socio-economic decisions which affect them, primarily GAP. In this respect, Tocci makes the point that within Turkey, “the greatest support [for accession to the EU] has come consistently from the predominantly Kurdish south-eastern provinces” (2007: 135).

The new global political order with its emphasis on the role of international non-governmental organizations such as the EU has been pushing Turkey to move away from its autocratic regime and accept the cosmopolitan democracy model, which would ensure “fundamental human rights exist[ing] alongside political, economic and social-cultural rights” (Winn 2002: 40). Thus, GAP, as a ‘social development’ project could not now be considered, as Turkish policy-makers had previously thought, only for economic, security and energy purposes. GAP has become internationalized in order to place the south-east in a larger framework. In other words, GAP as a state-led development project has been increasingly challenged since the end of the Cold War by many democratic civic developments such as cosmopolitan democracy, as the proposition that the Turkish state is not the only actor and is not the only authority connected with the GAP project has come to the fore. In particular, in the context of the EU’s 2004 report on Turkey-EU accession

negotiations, Turkey faced major challenges on regional policy by the European Council.¹⁴⁷ The report stated that:

The Union reaffirms its commitment that if the European Council decides in December 2004, on the basis of a report and recommendation from the Commission, that Turkey fulfills the Copenhagen political criteria, the EU will open accession negotiations with Turkey without delay. (Council of the European Communities 2004: 3)

The EU report requested that “Turkey should set up a regional development policy that would enable it to participate in EU programmes for strengthening economic and social cohesion” (Ibid: 41). The regional policy was of course not limited to the general economic and social cohesion implications. The GAP project was essential regional policy that the EU wanted Turkey to implement in line with its criteria.

The EU required all candidates for membership to “meet institutional requirements of the EU regional policies during the accession negotiations” and, overall, in those states which were accepted as members, this imperative “brought about a major reform of their local and regional governance structures” (Beleli 2005: 2).¹⁴⁸ New candidates for membership have faced up to the institutional reforms required, in the form of “regional decentralization and the establishment of democratized regional governance structures” (Ibid).

Broadly speaking, Turkey was told that it must prepare to implement the *acquis* by the time of EU accession, including “social progress, aiming at high levels of employment and social protection, the raising of the standard of living and quality of life and economic and social cohesion, [as this] is a key factor of economic performance as well as social justice” (Commission of the European Communities 2004: 41). Moreover, the Kurdish question, in particular, was to be addressed comprehensively.

Other organizations, such as the WCD, requested that when planning a dam project the host state should take into account:

¹⁴⁷ See Commission of the European Communities, *2004 Regular Report*, ec.europa.eu/enlargement/archives/pdf/key.../2004/rr_tr_2004_en.pdf (accessed 5 June 2015).

¹⁴⁸ See more in Beleli, Ö, *Regional policy and EU accession: learning from the GAP experience*, *Turkish Policy Quarterly* 2005, esiweb.org.

international and national laws progressively aimed at empowering indigenous peoples to play a decisive role in development planning and implementation. Constitutions in some countries recognise the vulnerability of indigenous people in mainstream development processes arising from their distinct culture and history and have designed safeguards to protect their rights. The scope of international law has widened and currently includes a body of conventional and customary norms concerning indigenous peoples, grounded on self-determination. In a context of increasing recognition of the self-determination of indigenous peoples, the principle of free, prior, and informed consent to development projects and plans affecting these groups has emerged as the standard to be applied in protecting and promoting their rights in the development process. (WCD 2000: 112)

The WCD states that local consent must govern development decisions, according to the framework of the cosmopolitan democracy model. As Archibugi indicated above, in the framework of cosmopolitan democracy, “citizens ... should be empowered in order to exercise their rights and duties, not just in their nations, but also in the political communities which affect their lives” (2012: 11).

However, such assumptions have been upsetting for Turkey. In particular, the requirements of the EU regarding the south-east, including economic and social cohesion and local rights related to GAP, were not welcomed by Turkey. Therefore, I argue that one of the reasons Turkey has not wanted to focus on completing the GAP ‘social development’ project was and is because the GAP notion of social development went beyond economic growth, in the context of the development of global institutions requiring cosmopolitan democracy, which would influence the cultural, political and collective rights of Kurds. Because of this, the Turkish state has become sceptical, not only about EU accession, but also about the completion of GAP in terms of delivering its so-called ‘social development’ aims.

In short, when the Turkish state realized that a cosmopolitan democratic regime within the EU might diminish its role as the primary driver of both economic and political affairs in the south-east, the state began to shift its focus from the social development of GAP, and mainly focused on hydroelectric power production and

security issues, such as building dams to prevent the passage of Kurdish guerrillas, and using hydroelectrics as a form of regional security in the Middle Eastern context.

However, the question arises as to whether Turkey as an associate member of the EU will ever fully respect Kurdish rights and complete GAP's social development programmes for improving their region, something which would have the potential to create long-term socio-economic, if not political, stabilization, or whether Turkey will continue its traditional approach towards the south-east by maintaining an authoritarian system in that region. This depends on how far the Turkish state, politicians, the ruling elite and, in particular, the traditionalists who are predominant within the civilian–military elite are willing to grasp the notion of the cosmopolitan democracy model.

7.6. Concluding remarks

This chapter has revealed that the concept of the GAP 'social development' project has been obstructed by various interrelated internal political developments and external global political developments. Internally, there have been three major political developments in the south-east which have obstructed GAP from reaching its key 'social development' goals. These are

1. The rise of the Kurdish national movement, which weakened the ambitions of the Turkish state to complete GAP's social programmes because of the unpredictable escalation of political issues concerning the Kurds;
2. The rise of the pro-Kurdish political party in the south-east, which has shifted the political power balance and shrunk the mainstream Turkish political parties' support for GAP;
3. Turkey's failure to create a concrete policy for resolving the Kurdish question, including the missed opportunity of 'peace processes' or 'peace talks' with the PKK, which has resulted in a focus on conflict rather than on the completion of the social programmes.

Externally, the notion of cosmopolitan democracy, led by international institutions and global geo-governance actors such as the EU, has played a role in generating a sceptical attitude within the Turkish state towards the completion of the GAP 'social programmes'. In particular, when Turkey became squeezed by the pressure of

cosmopolitan democracy, as part of the global political development of the post-Cold War 'new world order', forcing it to review its traditional politics and veer away from its predominantly statist policy in the south-east and consider the project not only in the context of economic development and security but also in relation to the environmental, cultural and political dimensions of the region, the Turkish state began to neglect GAP's social programmes.

To conclude, I would argue that, on the one hand, as the result of the above three interrelated 'internal' political developments, and on the other hand, as the result of the emergence of post-Cold War global geo-governance, transnational or cosmopolitan regimes of democratization have had a vital, essentially negative impact on Turkish regional politics regarding the south-east in relation to the GAP project, including Kurdish demands for their cultural recognition, if not self-determination. In particular, the pressure of the requirements of cosmopolitan democracy for the interests of the region's inhabitants (mainly Kurds) to be taken into account and for them to have a role in the project. Therefore, Turkey has effectively abandoned any attempt to complete the 'social development' aspirations of GAP, despite the fact that the official GAP website indicates the intention to complete the project by 2018. This date, along with all the other dates originally posited, has a distinctly theoretical ring about it.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

The fact that the GAP ‘social development’ project was originally conceived as a means of overcoming the longstanding chronic poverty created by the socio-economic situation of the south-east region is undeniable. This study has demonstrated that when Turkey was in the process of restructuring its growing economy in the 1980s and 1990s, adopting the neo-liberal model in order to do so, with the aim of obtaining an influential place in an increasingly global economic and political structure, the backwardness of the south-east could no longer be ignored. Thus, overcoming the socio-economic problems of the region required specific attention, and GAP was the consequence. However, the ‘social development’ aspect of GAP became less of a priority for the Turkish state, and GAP’s social programmes failed to come to fruition.

The purpose of this thesis has not only been to examine the creation of the GAP ‘social development’ project and its mission, but to explore which factors have resulted in the project failing to reach its ‘social development’ goals. To make these issues more comprehensible, I began by focusing on the longstanding political tension between the south-east region and centralized Turkish authority, and the unequal socio-economic development of the south-east relative to the rest of Turkey.

I have shown how the Turkish economy has been undergoing a lengthy process of development, modernization and expansion ever since the creation of the republic. Although when the Ottoman state dissolved in the 1920s it left the economy in a poor condition, the new Turkish republic, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, devoted itself to breaking out of the traditional mould of Turkish society, creating secularity, rationality and a modern industrial economy. Turkey modernized rapidly in all areas, including security, economy, culture and politics (Aydın 2005; Henze 1993; Keyman 2007).

This commitment to modernization and development was the crucial driver in establishing the policies of the newly created Turkish state, and its policy-makers and the intellectual–bureaucratic elites were committed to the introduction of westernizing reforms in government and society, in accord with the will of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk believed that in order to move on from traditional social norms, which he saw

as synonymous with backwardness, Turkey had to turn its face toward the West and its culture, and away from the East.

So the creation of a modern Turkish republic “in the wake of the demise of the Ottoman Empire [was] an anomaly somewhat out of place in the Middle East” (Knudsen 2003: 199). Turkey has distanced itself from its Middle Eastern neighbours and sought to orientate its position toward the West. This was perceived not only as disappointing but also as an act of betrayal by the Muslim Middle Eastern states, and since Turkey allied itself with the West, and the United States in particular, its relations with Middle Eastern countries have been strained.

However, in order to create a new society, secure the new Turkish state and modernize, Atatürk wanted a European-type parliamentary system of government, and for Turkey, as a member of Western civilization, to be run as a republican regime. This involved the establishment of six principles: nationalism, populism, republicanism, secularism, etatism and revolutionism (Kili 1980; Akural 1984; Rumford 2003; Bozdağlıoğlu 2003).

Atatürk’s secular nation-state has been strongly influenced by the military, which has, on several occasions, openly dictated the country’s politics. The military has seen itself as the unique protector of the Turkish Republic, and in 1960, 1971 and 1980, military juntas seized power, consolidating the army’s political power by reinforcing its position to the point where no civilian political organization could oppose it, and the military has restructured the constitution in a way which has allowed it to legitimize its intervention in everyday Turkish civilian politics. Although the political influence of the Turkish military has been reduced in recent years, it is still a significant force within the country.

The overall Turkish economy has successfully expanded since the creation of the republic, particularly since the 1980s, when the world political economy was reformatted on the basis of the neo-liberal development model, which led to robust, positive socio-economic development in Turkey. Turkey continued to undertake reforms; “capital markets such as the reopening of the Istanbul Stock Exchange, the beginning of Treasury auctions for marketing new government debt, the formation of an inter-bank money market, and other changes” (Filiztekin 2006: 20). The sharp development in the Turkish economy under the neo-liberal development model enabled Turkey to become a member of the European Economic Community (EEC),

which was the first step towards becoming a member of the 'European family' (Aral 2001).

However, there was a major obstacle in the way of Turkey securing its place in a globalized world system, and ultimately obstructing it from becoming a full member of the EU, and this was the underdevelopment of the south-east region, which Turkey had ignored since the creation of the republic. Turkish policy-makers began to realize that ignoring the backwardness of the south-east was going to hinder Turkey's progress. The socio-economic and politically volatile issues in the south-east, and the historically tense relationships between the Turkish state and the Kurds in the region (Kılıç 1998; Özcan 2006; Kendal 1993), were now making the situation harder for these policy-makers.

However, none of these problems were going to be easily overcome. First of all, the Kurds were sceptical towards the Turkish state, since they felt betrayed by the creators of the republic. For instance, they had been promised autonomy for the region, and told that they would choose their own rulers (Kılıç 1998: 26). But the state denied the existence of the Kurds. The Turkish state simply denied the fact that there is a separate Kurdish ethnic identity, instead calling them 'mountain Turks' (Short and McDermott 1975: 8), a policy which led to three major Kurdish uprisings before the 1980s, the Sheikh Said uprising in 1925, the 'Ararat Uprising' in the 1930s and, in 1937, the third major uprising, led by Sayyid Riza, in Dersim (Tunceli).

Although there was no serious Kurdish resistance during the period between 1938 and 1970, a fact which gave Turkey a vital opportunity to focus on dealing with the social and economic backwardness of the south-east, it failed to do so, instead pushing the region further into the hands of the 'tribal' leaders and religious men such as the 'sheikhs', resulting in even further isolation of the south-east from the rest of the country in both social and economic terms. Atatürk had crushed and outlawed all the religious orders and ordered that Turkey must leave its traditional way of life behind, adopt Western civilization, and become a modern country. However, since the 'tribal' leaders and 'sheikhs' (who were against the idea of westernization and were markedly traditional, or 'backward', as Atatürk and his followers saw it) were working in the interests of the Turkish political leaders in the region in such ways as collecting votes for the government and keeping the local people under control, Turkey let them continue to control the region, with the sole proviso that they stayed loyal to Turkey. As long as everyone obeyed the official ideology and accepted

Atatürk's direction, "Happy is the man who calls himself a Turk" (Rugman and Hutchings 1996: 26), they were left in peace. So in the period between 1938 and 1970, since the Kurds were silent and the region was being run in the interest of the Turkish state under these feudal sheikhs and aghas, Turkey abandoned the south-east, thereby socially, economically, and arguably politically, pushing it into further hardship.

Although in the 1970s some Kurdish intellectuals and students who lived or studied in big Turkish cities and protested against Turkish policy in their region under the banner of the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKD), Turkey, instead of reconsidering its policy towards the region and grasping the political danger of not dealing with the issues, after a short period outlawed their activities and imprisoned them (Entessar 1992).

Furthermore, when a few years later Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, the Kurdish Workers' Party (PKK), led by Abdullah Öcalan, who created a Kurdish National Liberation Movement with the aim of putting an end to the Turkish policy towards the Kurds and their region, succeeded in reawakening Kurds and put the Kurdish question on the world agenda, Turkey continued to stick to its traditional policy regarding the region's socio-economic and political problems.

However, by the late 1980s, the issue of the south-east posed two problems for the Turkish state. Firstly, Turkey could no longer ignore the region, because its backwardness was creating problems for the country with regard to taking its desired position in the globalized world system, most importantly becoming a full EU member.

Secondly, since the end of Cold War, 'new thinking' about strategy, international security and politics has led to the traditional statist and militarized view on international politics being dramatically altered. A new kind of world system has been created. The Hobbesian notion of the world has become less meaningful, and the traditionalists' conceptual framework of the state has been overturned during this period. Sovereign states or nation-states, which were once universal, have begun to lose their classical position in the global system as the importance of "military – political security declined after the post-Cold War" (Buzan *et al* 1998: viii).

The concept of the state being in control of everything was challenged, as Strange (1996: 4) described it:

Where states were once the masters of markets, now it is the markets which, on many crucial issues, are the masters over the governments of states. And the declining authority of states is reflected in a growing diffusion of authority to other institutions and associations, and to local and regional bodies, and in a growing asymmetry between the larger states with structural power and weaker ones without it.

In order to continue to exist, the states have begun to look at other growing concerns with regard to development, such as security (political, economic, environmental and societal) (Buzan, Waeber and de Wilde 1998; Anderson and Fenech 1994). In particular, issues such as increasing population, with growing demand for fresh water, food and energy, have become crucial for nation-states.

In the context of this post-Cold War era, I argue that the south-east has come to hold a new strategic position for the Turkish state. Thus, the materialization of the GAP project should be understood in a wider national, if not international, framework. In particular, the GAP project has brought new opportunities and strategies, such as hydroelectric energy production, and since Turkey is upstream on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, has positioned the country as a hegemonic state in the Middle East. In this regard, the GAP ‘social development’ project, I argue, was originally a political project predominantly motivated by the strategic interest of the Turkish government in strengthening its position of power through addressing political matters in the south-east region and thereby employing its hegemonic strategy in the context of the Middle East.

Although this thesis has not studied Turkish policy regarding GAP in relation to its external security in any detail, we should also bear in mind that the project puts downstream states such as Syria and Iraq in a “strategically and materially disadvantageous position, and therefore threatens their national security” (Rohr 1999: 3). Thus the project has the extra benefit for Turkey of enhancing internal as well as external security, and “contributing to the long-term military-political goal of macro-regional hegemony” (Warner 2004: 19).

In short, the GAP project involves Turkey holding on to the waters of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers through the creation of dams, potentially enabling the country to gain a strategic position over Syria and Iraq through hydro-hegemony. Therefore, I argue that GAP serves Turkey’s long-term goal of regional hegemony,

with the utilization of the Euphrates and Tigris waters not only being for Turkish energy needs but also to enhance its political position in the Middle East, which in turn would enable it to become a powerful regional actor in the globalized world political economy, eventually widening the EU door to the country.

To recap, GAP as a social development project was thought to have the potential to diminish the social, economic and ethnographic problems of the south-east and turn the region into a profitable, modernized area, narrowing the socio-economic gap between the region and the west of Turkey particularly through the production of hydro-electricity, while at the same time strengthening its geo-regional hegemonic position within the Middle East. Turkish state planners adopted the concept from the global development model, believing that the process of socio-economic development, assisted by the GAP social programmes, would overcome the backwardness of the region and enable the modernization of its traditional society, in the process providing social stability alongside socio-economic integration between the underdeveloped south-east/Kurds and the industrialised west/Turks.

In order to make the subject more comprehensible, I also assessed the overall literature on the GAP 'social development' project. The Turkish government presents GAP as a 'social development' scheme that will create economic, social and spatial changes, and which is intended to end the chronic poverty of the south-east/Kurdish region by raising local people's income levels and living standards, providing social stability and economic growth through the enhancement of the employment capacity of the regional sector and creating socio-economic integration between the region and the west of Turkey. Most public discourse reflects this position.

Broadly speaking, there has been a considerable amount of work on GAP regarding it as an alternative socio-economic formula for dealing with the backwardness of the south-east through the 'social development' programmes. I analyzed the literature in relation to the 'social development' project and its politicization, showing how it has been used by the Turkish state to attempt to deal with the Kurdish question.

However, since the aims of the 'social development' programmes have not been achieved, I have studied the most relevant works concerning the obstacles that have blocked the progress of the GAP project. I have examined the overall project through empirical and theoretical work, and studied the most relevant literature in this

context, enabling me to grasp aspects of the issue that have not been recognized in the literature, and I have discussed this.

Since the GAP ‘social development’ project is involved with regional politics, I examined the background of the GAP project more broadly, particularly in chapters two to four. In chapter two I examined the physicality and construction of the GAP project. In chapter three, I clarified why there was a perceived need for the GAP ‘social development’ project in the south-east, a region that had been socially and economically neglected by the Turkish state. I then assessed the unequal social development of the south-east relative to the rest of the country. Chapter four was mainly devoted to the literature review.

Whilst I indicated that GAP has made significant progress towards achieving sustainable development, I also stated that GAP has failed to reach its original target. In terms of the positive progress, social services such as Multi-Purpose Community Centres (*Çok Amaçlı Toplum Merkezleri (ÇATOM)*),¹⁴⁹ which provide services for girls over the age of 14 and local women, including “literacy courses, health education, nutritional and housekeeping courses, maternal education, knitting and weaving courses, as well as poly-clinical services” (Carkoglu and Eder 2005: 178-9), and GAP Youth House Centres (*GAP Gençlik Evleri*)¹⁵⁰, which have been providing social activities for young people and offering lessons on information technology, writing, reading, English, music, theatre, folk dance and photography, including Children’s Development Centres, which provide social activities for younger children aged from 4 to 6 and 7 to 14, including lessons for pre-school education, Turkish language and mathematics, reading and writing, technology and arts. Children’s Development Centres provide a great opportunity for socially and economically disadvantaged parents. In these respects, GAP has made important progress. In terms of hydro-electric power plant 74% of the project has been completed. However, GAP has not succeeded in irrigating around 18 million hectares as planned. Only around 20% of land in the south-east has so far been brought under irrigation. This land that has achieved good productivity in the form of pulses, vegetables and fruit, cereals and

¹⁴⁹ See TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx; GAP ÇATOM, www.gapcatom.org (accessed 2 June 2013).

¹⁵⁰ See GAP-Gençlik evleri in TC Kalkınma Bakanlığı GAP İdaresi Başkanlığı, www.gap.gov.tr/site-icerik/gap_nedir.aspx (accessed 2 June 2013).

cotton (www.gap.gov.tr, accessed 5 June 2011). The industrial sectors have also experienced some positive developments.

However, my empirical work, including primary evidence, government documents and independent reports, indicates that the GAP ‘social development’ project is far behind the target in the GAP-Master Plan; the project has not reached its main social development target and has not overcome the longstanding socio-economic backwardness of the south-east.

The south-east is still the least developed area in Turkey, both economically and socially. The claim that GAP would provide jobs for local people and that it would end poverty in the south-east, as Altan Tan, local MP, member of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (*Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi* (BDP)) (personal interview, June 2011), argued, was merely the project’s mask. It is a political device as opposed to something which policy-makers are sincerely committed to.

My research also shows that GAP has failed to improve the region’s literacy levels. The level of education, especially for girls, is low. For instance, as Müsvet Çakar (personal interview, June, 2011, Mardin), president of the Environmental Ecology and Support Ecology Association (*Çevre Ekoloji ve Yasatma Destekleme Derneğini*), stated: “Mardin is the fourth from the bottom in Turkey in regard to literacy.” The research also reveals that a specific group of people who have been employed by the state in the region benefit economically from the project, not the inhabitants, who are mainly peasants. Therefore I argue that the project has been inequitable, resulting in an imbalance between the income of local people and those brought in to the region as a result of the project.

My work also indicates that the rather small proportion of the land that has been irrigated is not distributed fairly. For instance, GAP policy-makers’ first priority in this respect has been those areas which are politically loyal to the Turkish state. For instance, the province of Sanliurfa, which is mainly inhabited by Arabs (who are supporters of the Turkish state), is the area which has benefited most from the project, whereas Diyarbakir, inhabited mainly by Kurds, has only received 5% of the water transfer. Similarly the area around the pro-Kurdish town of Suruç in Sanliurfa province is one of the most fertile areas in the region, much more so than the Harran Plain, which adjoins a pro-Turkish town, in the same province. While Harran has been receiving water from the Atatürk Dam, no water has yet been transferred from the dam to Suruç. One of the participants from Suruç (name not given, personal

interview, June 2011)¹⁵¹ said: “We are being punished by the Turkish state for being Kurds.” From this perspective, I would argue that the GAP project has been merely a political ploy.

The negative outcomes of the project have been more significant than the positive ones for the local people. The majority of my interviewees stated their complained that GAP had destroyed their lives and forced many to leave their homes with very little compensation. That which they did receive did not come with any plan or advice on how to use it. Many of my interviewees observed that because they had no previous experience of dealing with large sums of cash, they either put it in a bank, in which case it eventually lost its value, or bought practical things such as a car. However, none of this resulted in ongoing financial stability, so many people faced further poverty, and many of these moved to big cities. Those people who had lost their lands and livelihood now had to struggle to live in a city. Many locals have been obliged to look for jobs in other parts of the country, and they believe that GAP is intended simply to provide energy for Turkish needs. It is true that Turkey gets almost 50% of its electricity from the GAP project.

However, there is a contradiction in the fact that the Turkish state continues to claim that the project will bring prosperity to the south-east despite the fact that there has been very little sign that it will create sustainable development there. This claim reminds one of the work of Eduardo Galeano. The concept of development, introduced by industrialized Western countries in Third World countries, carries the proviso that, “[t]he Third World will become like the First World, – rich, cultivated and happy if it behaves and does what it is told, without saying anything or complaining” (Galeano 1997: 214). These countries listened and made a conscious effort to hear good news for years, but it has never arrived. The difference is that the local people in south-east Turkey do not wait or listen, because the idea that GAP will modernize the region and bring higher living standards has failed to convince them. After much verbal posturing and too many promises from the representatives of the state, my empirical work reveals that local people have become less willing to trust the claims by the state that it will develop the region via GAP. Sebaha Tuncel, independent MP in Istanbul (personal interview, June 2011), indicated that the project

¹⁵¹ Suruç town is very pro-Kurdish, and many Kurdish guerillas originated there, so many of my participants were concerned that they should remain anonymous.

had destroyed many people's hopes, after they had been waiting for years for GAP to bring prosperity to their region.

Since the project has been a 'top-down' creation, not involving any consultation with local people, the latter, particularly Kurds, have begun to believe that the project has nothing to do with social development but rather that it is the state's hidden political tool in the region, a means of assimilating Kurds. Making Kurdish villages disappear and forcing the Kurds to live in big cities, the Turkish state believe eventually that the Kurds will be assimilated through "their forced inclusion into mainstream Turkish society and culture" (Ronayne 2005: 36).

My research also shows the ways in which the GAP Project has been destructive to local civilization in the south-east. The construction of GAP dams has already buried many archaeological sites such as Zeugma or Belkis (modern name) and Nevali Çori, and the project will soon lead to the destruction of the ancient city of Hasankeyf. The dams have had a serious negative impact on the environment, ecology, archaeological sites, historical towns, settlements and cultures in the region.

I also discussed the Aswan High Dam in Egypt, which, like GAP, has had a negative impact on human life, the environment, cultural heritage and archaeological sites. For instance the Aswan project has deeply affected thousands of Nubian lives in ways similar to how GAP has affected local communities in the south-east of Turkey. However, my research reveals that the Aswan project has been extremely positive in terms of the region's socio-economy, and played a major role in the overall development of the entire country, whereas GAP has been intertwined with regional political issues and has been constructed to serve Turkish state policies in the region, despite the fact that it is officially supposed to be, like the Aswan High Dam, a sustainable regional and socio-economic development project.

Many mainstream Turkish political party leaders and the Turkish state itself, particularly at the beginning of the GAP project, genuinely wanted it to be completed. However, it has failed to revolutionize the south-east region's socio-economic situation through profitable farming and employment opportunities. Hence the question arises, what have been the obstacles to the realization of the project?

In order to reveal the main obstacles, I looked at four developments, three internal and one external, which I believe have obstructed the project.

The first internal factor is the rise of the Kurdish national movement in the south-east, allied with the development of Kurdish *de facto* authority in Turkey's

neighbouring countries. The Kurdish National Liberation Movement has been led by the PKK, which “developed [a] broad organizational structure and displayed an enormous capacity to mobilize Kurds both within and without Turkey, especially in Europe” (Hirschler 2001: 146). “The PKK, at one point, was estimated to have some 10,000 well-armed insurgents and could command the loyalty of 50,000 militia and, according to government estimates, 375,000 sympathizers” (Barkey and Fuller 1997: 60). The battle between Turkish troops and the PKK guerrillas turned the region into a war zone, and this has impacted on Turkish thinking in relation to GAP ‘social development’ programmes.

Meanwhile, the development of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey’s neighbouring countries, especially since the Kurds in Iraq achieved autonomy at the end of the second Gulf War (Stansfield 2003), has also influenced the Turkish state with regard to its internal Kurdish question, and the geopolitical and geostrategic issues in the region.

I argue that the rise of the Kurdish national movement in the region has weakened the ambition of the Turkish state to complete GAP’s social programmes. This is, firstly, because of the unpredictable escalation of political developments with regard to the Kurds and, secondly, when the original ‘social development’ project did not work out for the Turkish state in the ways in which it was planned, it began neglecting the social programme. The policy-makers have had to concentrate on security issues in the south-east, and have come to ignore the importance of GAP’s social programmes in the region.

Secondly, the rise of the pro-Kurdish political party and the losses experienced by mainstream Turkish political parties has shifted the balance of political power in the south-east, and this has shrunk the mainstream parties’ support for GAP, again leading to the project being neglected. Turkish mainstream political parties used to get substantial numbers of votes from the region, but with the rise of the pro-Kurdish party, this ceased to be the case. The emergence of the pro-Kurdish political party, which was established in the 1990s and has had successful results ever since, diminished support for all the mainstream Turkish political parties, and the latter gradually removed their support from GAP. According to one of my participants in Hasankeyf (June 2011): “All this is politics and the Turkish government and politicians are punishing the Kurds for not being faithful.”

My research shows that, despite the fact that Turkey has tried to block the

development of the pro-Kurdish party, closing it down several times and imprisoning many elected Kurdish politicians, the pro-Kurdish political movement received an increasing percentage of votes and finally, in the 2015 general election, the People's Democratic Party (*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*) broke the 10% national vote threshold to become the fourth elected party in Turkey. The loss of the Turkish mainstream parties' dominant position to pro-Kurdish parties in the GAP region has resulted in negligence towards the 'social development' project, contributing to the project failing to reach its target.

Finally, the failures of Turkish politics and the strategies of the Turkish state regarding the Kurdish question, particularly the 'peace talks' between the PKK and the Turkish state, had a negative impact on the GAP project. Despite the fact that Turkey made several attempts to make peace with the PKK and end the turmoil, it has always been sceptical towards the Kurds. For instance, the Oslo talks were carried out in a positive atmosphere but failed in 2012, and later when the Turkish Prime Minister and the PKK leader, Öcalan, publically revealed that new peace talks were taking place between the Turkish state and the PKK, it was widely perceived as good news and a new opportunity to end the longstanding Kurdish issue.

However, this hope ended when the Democratic Union Party (*Partiya Yekîtiya Demokra* (PYD)) movement arose in Syria, a counterpart to the PKK. Turkey feared that another autonomous Kurdish state, led by PKK ideology, together with Iraqi Kurdistan, would be a death threat to unified Turkey. In this respect, I argue that Turkey continued its traditional policies, refusing to resolve the Kurdish question, despite the fact that the last 'peace talks' provided a great opportunity for the region's stabilization, which in turn would assist GAP in pursuing its objectives in terms of the region's socio-economic development. If Turkey had succeeded in creating long-term peace with the Kurds in the region, the GAP project would have been in a position to rebalance the economy between the west of Turkey and the south-east.

However, having pointed to the three major internal obstacles, interrelated political issues that have prevented the 'social development' project from becoming reality, I argue that there is also an external factor that has impacted on GAP. I have analyzed GAP in the context of the global political framework that has arisen in the post-Cold War period. This has manifested itself as a new system, which has required individual nation-states to reshuffle their obligations within the concept of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy. From this global political development, the idea

of cosmopolitan democracy has been developed in order to overcome the complexities of the period.

The development of cosmopolitan democracy has begun to challenge the concept behind the Westphalia Treaty, the Realist philosophy that sovereign states are the only actor occupying centre stage in world politics. Cosmopolitan regimes of democratization, as one element of globalization in the post-Cold War period, have been developed by liberal thinkers such as Archibugi, Held, Beck and others, “with the aim of providing intellectual arguments in favour of an expansion of democracy, both within states and at the global level” (Archibugi 2004: 437), creating the theoretical possibility of perpetual peace in the world, and reducing the power of nation-states via global democratic governance in the form of organizations such as the EU.

The core concept of the cosmopolitan regime of democracy has been to focus “on the role of citizens who should be empowered in order to exercise their rights and duties, not just in their nations, but also in the political communities which affect their lives” (Archibugi 2012: 11). Cosmopolitan democracy has become enforcement, led by the EU, resulting in Turkey, as a candidate for EU membership, having had to address its internal politics and regional policies such as GAP as a matter of urgency.

I pointed out that Turkey has been fighting for a long time to join the EU, having perceived it in terms of its economic and security benefits. However, with the end of the Cold War, the expansion of EU criteria and the potential impact of the EU’s adherence to a cosmopolitan regime of democracy became an issue in Turkish regional domestic politics, and this included the GAP Project. The Turkish state and its political elites have consequently become sceptical as to whether they should join the EU.

The Turkish state and its predominantly statist elite have been keen to continue to be the only principal actor in both economic and political affairs. So a development such as the cosmopolitanization of democracy was considered to be a threat to national sovereignty, traditional values and the traditional system of internal security. However, EU criteria involve a membership mandate; not only the stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and protection of minority rights, but also a guarantee of regional socio-economic development. In other words, the GAP project should be nurtured within the cosmopolitan regime of democracy. The regime of cosmopolitan democracy takes into account “certain ethnic

or cultural groups that, although willing to continue to be part of their state of origin, want to obtain specific collective rights” (Archibugi 2008: 227). This approach has been deeply disconcerting for the Turkish state, politicians and ruling elite, who have linked it to the ‘Sèvres syndrome’.

Turkey wanted to develop the GAP project in the framework of economic growth and security, not in terms of the cultural and political dimensions of the south-east; and it never wanted to be pressurized by external political developments such as the regime of cosmopolitan democracy, or by EU requirements concerning cultural and political rights including those related to the environment, historical sites, cultural heritage and the regional policy of the Turkish state. Broadly speaking, as Archibugi indicated, in the framework of cosmopolitan democracy, “citizens ... should be empowered in order to exercise their rights and duties, not just in their nations, but also in the political communities which affect their lives” (Archibugi 2012: 11).

However, such assertions have been upsetting for Turkey. Therefore, I argue that this external factor is one of the reasons that Turkey has become sceptical, not only about EU accession, but also about the completion of the GAP ‘social development’ project, shifting its focus from social development to concentrate on hydroelectric power production and security, building dams which prevent the free movement of Kurdish guerrillas, and using hydroelectricity as a form of regional security in the context of the Middle East. Broadly speaking, Turkey has effectively abandoned any attempt to complete the GAP ‘social development’ target, despite the fact that the official GAP website continues to refer to the intention to complete the project, the target date now having moved again, to 2018.

Therefore I argue that despite the fact that I have described four problems, three internal and one external, that have impacted on the GAP ‘social development’ project, the obstacles to it are also related to the historical ambiguity and paradoxical nature of Turkish policy in the region. GAP could have been successfully implemented if these policies and the mind-set of the state towards the Kurds had changed. It appears that the GAP ‘social development’ project will not be able to play its role either in dealing with the longstanding socio-economic issues of the south-east or in enabling integration between the west of Turkey and the region, unless Turkey radically reconsiders its traditional state policies towards the region, accepts Kurdish cultural empowerment, and enable the region’s inhabitants to actively co-operate with the project. Ultimately whether the concept of ‘development/modernization’ can be

employed to enable the GAP 'social development' project to succeed depends on where developments in terms of Kurdish nationalism are heading and how far the Turkish state and politicians, the ruling elite, are willing to understand and accept the cosmopolitan democracy model.

Appendix I: Interview Questions

Questions for GAP Directors and Staff

1. What are Turkey's key aims and future plans for GAP?
2. How will the region benefit from the GAP project?
3. How many jobs is GAP likely to provide in the region? Has it provided any yet?
4. Has the project led to opportunities for entrepreneurs?
5. To what extent has the ÇATOM project created opportunities for women and young girls to become aware of their problems?
6. The people most affected by GAP appear to be young people. 'Youth to Youth Social Project' was supposed to address this issue. What is the situation with these young people now? Did the project provide jobs and education for them?
7. What is the impact of GAP on traditional local agriculture?
8. What is the contribution of the GAP project to the country and the region so far?
9. How will GAP fulfil the economic gap between the west and east of Turkey?
10. Only about 3.4 % of Turkish enterprises in manufacturing industry are available in the region compared with the west of the country. To what extent will the project lessen this gap?
11. What do you mean by saying that GAP is a transformational and an integrational regional development project?
12. Many historical sites have already been flooded. Was there any attempt to salvage anything?
13. Is there any environmental effect on local people as a result of flooding?
14. Is there any negative affect on the ecosystem and environmental damage in the region as a result of the flood?

Questions for NGOs, Academics and MPs

1. How do you characterize the aims of GAP?
2. Does the region benefit from the GAP project?

3. Has GAP increased the local economy?
4. To what extent has GAP affected welfare locally?
5. Do you think that GAP is a great opportunity for the region?
6. Is there an environmental effect on local people as a result of the flooding?
7. What are the long-term environmental prospects in the region?
8. Do you think that GAP will affect the region's ecological and environmental aspects?
9. Do you think that GAP will change the ecosystem and affect natural life in the region?
10. To what extent has GAP caused displacement?
11. What are the psychological effects on people who have been dispossessed by the project?
12. What is GAP's justification for flooding historical sites?
13. Does Turkey intend to create an interdependent relationship between the Kurdish community and the rest of Turkey via GAP?
14. Do you think GAP is a social-development project designed to help the locals in the region or is it a source of security?
15. What are Turkey's key aims and future plans for GAP?

Questions for Displaced/Resettled People

1. What is the GAP project?
2. Did you have land before the Dam was flooded? If yes, do you have any now?
3. How is your new life in the new resettlement? (Socially and economically)
4. What are the differences between your new house and your old house?
5. Did you get paid compensation payments? If yes, did you receive compensation on time?
6. Are you happy with the money you did get?
7. Would you prefer being compensated financially or being able to stay in your old house?
8. Did you have any misrepresentation of the value of your house? If so, how did this affect your life?
9. To what extent has the GAP project affected your life in general?
10. Did or do you suffer any social problems?

11. Are you happy here with your new life?
12. Do you have a job?
13. Do you think GAP is a social-development project designed to help the locals in the region or is it a source of security?

Appendix II: List of Interviewees

Names	Title and Position	Date and Place of Interview
Abdurrahman Karaman	Local resident, Samsat	July 2011, Samsat
Adalet H. Akbas	Coordinator of the GAP – ÇATOMs	June 2011, Sanliurfa
Ahmet Gökçek	Local resident, Halfeti	July 2011, Halfeti
Ahmet Özer	Professor in the University of Süleyman Demirel. Isparta	June 2011, Istanbul
Altan Tan	Local MP and member of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (<i>Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi</i> (BDP))	June, 2011, Diyarbakir
Ali Çarkoglu	Professor in University of Koç, Istanbul	June 2011, Istanbul
Erdal Balsak	A member of staff at the Derik Town Hall	June 2011, Istanbul
Erkin	Board member of the Association for Social Change (Sosyal Değişim Derneğinde yönetim kurulu üyesi)	June 2011, Diyarbakir
Gaye Yilmaz	University of Bogazici	June 2011, Istanbul
Fırat Argun	Local resident, Hasankeyf	June 2011, Hasankeyf
Kurt	GAP-Youth House staff member, Mardin	June 2011,

		Mardin
Leyla Gün	GAP-ÇATOM staff member, Mardin	June 2011, Mardin
Mehmet Açıkgöz	GAP regional director	July 2011, Sanliurfa
Mehmet Çelik	Local textile businessman from Samsat town	July 2011, Samsat
Müsvet Çakar	President of an NGO, the Environmental Ecology and Support Ecology Association (Çevre Ekoloji ve Yasatma Destekleme Dernegini), in Mardin	June 2011, Mardin
Ömer Faruk Paköz	Chairman of Keep Hasankeyf and Tigris Dicle River Alive Association (Hasankeyf ve Dicle Nehri Yaşatma Derneği başkanı)	June 2011, Hasankeyf
Sadrettin Karahocagil	President of GAP	July 2011, Ankara
Sabahat Tuncel	MP and member of the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (<i>Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi</i> (BDP))	June 2011, Istanbul
Serhat Öz	NGO staff member from the Keep Hasankeyf Alive Initiative Activists (Hasankeyfi yaşatma girişiminde activist)	June 2011, Hasankeyf
Mahsun Kepti	Local resident, Suceken village, Batman province	June 2011, Hasankeyf
Mustafa Seven	Local resident, Yenicagla village, Batman	June 2011, Batman
Mesut	Local resident, Hasankeyf	June 2011,

		Hasankeyf
Nail Ayberk	Locally elected head of the village, Halfeti	July 2011, Halfeti July 2011, Halfeti
Nedim Tüzün	Chairman of the electrical engineering committee, Diyarbakir	July 2011, Diyarbakir
Gülbahar Ölmek	Assistant to the mayor of Surici/Diyarbakir	July 2011, Diyarbakir
Anonymous x 4	Local residents, Suruç	June 2011, Suruç
Anonymous x 5	Local residents, Halfeti	July 2011, Halfeti
Anonymous x 2	Local residents, Hasankeyf	June 2011, Hasankeyf
Anonymous x 2	Local residents, Samsat,	July 2011, Samsat
Anonymous x 2	Local residents, Harran	July 2011, Harran
Anonymous x 2	Local residents, Diyarbakir	July 2011, Diyarbakir
Anonymous x 2	Local residents, Yenicagla village, Batman	June 2011, Yenicagla village, Batman

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